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ABSTRACT

This paper describes a Life Skills Course developed by Saskatchewan Newstart Inc. The course represents an attempt to integrate educational and psychotherapeutic principles and techniques for the development of personal competence in many aspects of life among the disadvantaged. It provides the student with competence in the use of problem solving skills in the areas of self, family, community, leisure, and job. Learning groups are formed which contain approximately ten students and their learning guide who is called a coach. Students participate in about 65 lessons and there are four main sources the coach encourages the students to exploit in their search for meaning and behavioral change. These include: (1) the skills and experiences the students bring to the learning group; (2) the coach's experience and training; (3) community resources; and (4) written materials containing the content and course objectives. Selected candidates for coaches go through a training program designed to prepare the learning guide as a leader of a Life Skills Group, a trainer in the application of problem solving and social skills and a resource person to his group. (RSM)

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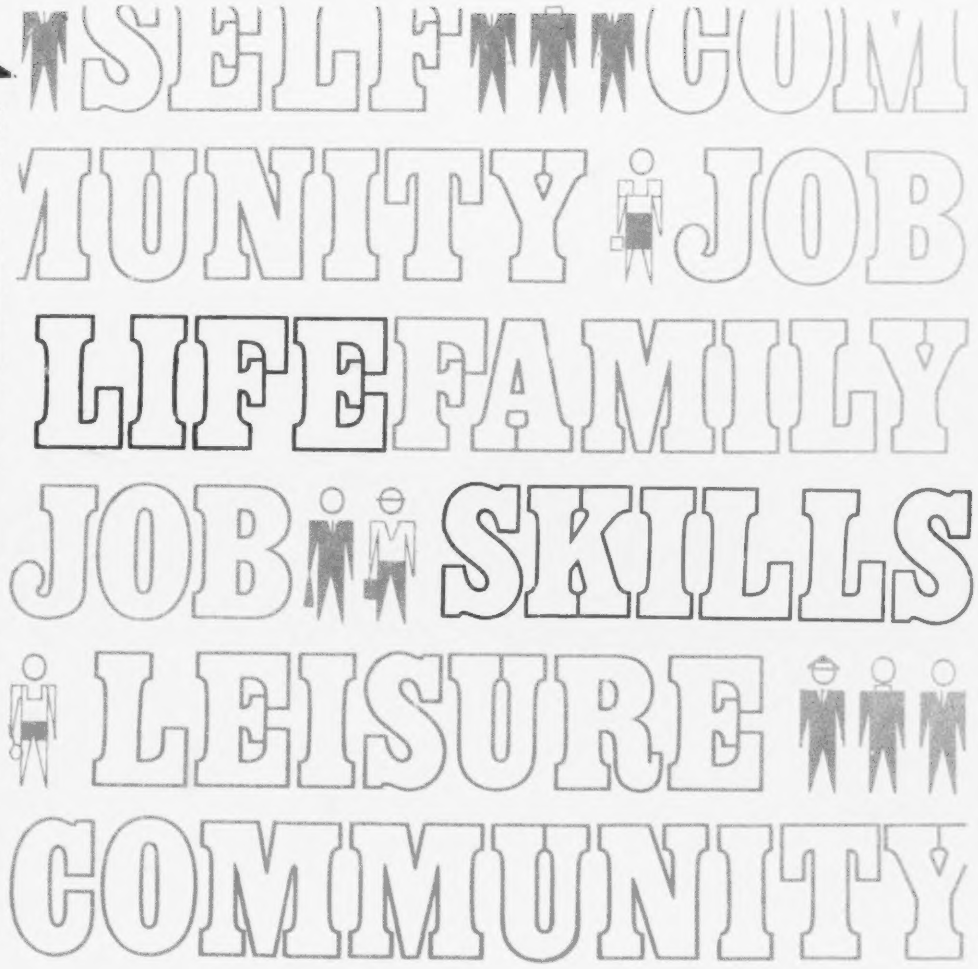
Saskatchewan NewStart Inc.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LIFE SKILLS:
a course in applied problem solving

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LIFE SKILLS: A COURSE IN APPLIED PROBLEM SOLVING

SASKATCHEWAN NEWSTART INC., PRINCE ALBERT, CANADA

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The experimental development of a course such as Life Skills does not always run smoothly and the staff of Saskatchewan NewStart gratefully acknowledges the support and encouragement of those who have served on the Board of Directors over the past two years: Noelle DesLauriers, Arnold Friesen, Albert Gallerneault, Edward A. Rawlinson, John W. T. Spinks and Jack Steuart.

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Over 300 adult students have contributed to the development of the course by taking part in it. Their assistance in this regard has been much appreciated.

The staff of the Life Skills Division have carried out their work under less than ideal circumstances, and under many, but continual, pressures. The fact that they have been able to develop new concepts under these circumstances is a tribute to the nature of the leadership provided by Ralph Himsl.

January, 1971

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INTRODUCTION

- D. Stuart Conger

We often associate poverty, illiteracy, disease, and racial conflict with the poorer nations of the world; but these problems exist in the rich nations too. Few Canadians would deny the existence and gravity of the problems of poverty, racial strife, unemployment, crime, and of the large number of people with low levels of education in Canada today.

Why have we made so little progress in solving these age-old problems in Canada despite our vast resources and technical know-how? The initiation of numerous programs and the development of many organizations to cope with these problems have yielded little real progress; we still try to cope with yesterday's problems while signs of new crises loom on the horizon. Why is this? It is our view that the principal reasons are:

1. We ignore the signs of approaching social crises and react to them only after they occur rather than anticipate and plan ahead to prevent them. This is to say we expend our resources on short-term, temporary solutions rather than invest in prevention.
2. We subscribe to the view that human well-being is the product of a good economy and attempt to use economic solutions to social problems.

D. Stuart Conger, Executive Director, Saskatchewan NewStart Incorporated.

3. Perhaps the most important fact is that in spite of the rapidly changing nature, scope and complexities of social problems, our institutions continue to use traditional methods to deal with them. Too frequently these methods are pathetically inadequate for the job.

Although in Canada we spend enormous sums on physical science research and development, we do little to develop better methods of reducing poverty and its related social ills; and this in spite of signs that we Canadians are in for a series of social crises as more groups find our social institutions inadequate and unresponsive to their needs. Ethnic groups, welfare recipients, unemployed, underemployed, and many others find it necessary to resort to forceful means to get social equality. Unless we develop better methods of coping with social problems these confrontations will be used increasingly to force change and to make institutions more responsive, effective and efficient.

Closely related to this is what may well be a phenomenon of our times, the alienation that many citizens feel from our social institutions, our schools, welfare agencies, churches, housing authorities, and governments. In part, this alienation derives from two sources: the gap between the intent of the politicians and the jurisdictions of the implementing agencies; and the gap between the intent of programs and the methods of implementation which often de-humanize the person presumably being helped.

In expressing their support for national social objectives, politicians attempt to capture the essence of the objective in a phrase which often sinks under a load of irony; think of "elimination of poverty," "War on Poverty," "the just society," and "equality of opportunity." The process of developing enabling legislation often distorts these ideas to accommodate existing legislation, jurisdictions and constitutional prerogatives; but damaging as that may be it is in the implementation that the real ruin sets in. By the time a program is made operational, it bears little relationship to the original objective of the politician to do something for the people. Three main factors wear away the promise and blunt the intent of the Parliamentary legislation.

Consideration of the war on poverty illustrates a first reason. The "action" in the war on poverty has been limited according to the usual jurisdictions of federal, provincial and local government, with each level divided again according to departments within those jurisdictions. For instance, at the federal level, different agencies and operating departments have responsibility for different aspects of poverty: Secretary of State; Manpower and Immigration; Health and Welfare; Regional Economic Expansion; Indian Affairs and Northern

Development, to name but a few. There is no focus of responsibility and authority. The result is the "cop-out" phenomenon whereby each agency interprets its legislation in such a way as to narrow its area of involvement as much as possible and diligently recognize the jurisdictional prerogatives of other agencies, and no comprehensive planning or programming can be achieved. Inter-departmental committees and task forces make a weak substitute for a focal point of responsibility and authority vested ultimately in one Cabinet Minister. With similar jurisdictional problems at other levels of government, the War on Poverty looks more like a guerilla war than a National Crusade.

But if the complex nature of government in our federal system cannot frustrate the intent of the legislation, a second factor adds its influence. Policy formulation is placed mainly in the hands of economists who translate social problems into economic problems and limit program conceptualization to allocation of money and other resources. Partly because of the predominance of economic thinking and of economists in the higher echelons of the federal civil service, the social objectives of the government become translated into economic objectives. These are then expressed in economic programs such as manpower development, labour force participation, job creation, industrial and economic development and incentives to industry for the employment of native people. The economic tools of money and resource allocation become ends in themselves rather than means to the achievement of social goals. Economic development programs are necessary but as substitutes for social development programs they will not of themselves resolve the problems of poverty. The fallacy in the reliance on economic development seems to be in the expectation that the jobs created by industrial and regional development will be filled by the poor indigenous to the development area; this does not happen unless significant efforts are made to motivate, train, place, counsel and sustain such people in their preparation, entry and adjustment to the work environment. There are numerous examples of industrial development creating new jobs with labour and staff imported to fill them, while the indigenous poor remain untrained, unemployed and continue to subsist on transfer payments of one sort or another. Furthermore, the standard approaches of the economist fall ready victim to the overlapping jurisdictions of the federal system, as it is easy to divide resources among the mosaic of national, provincial and local agencies waging their individual guerilla wars.

Finally, at the implimentation level, program formulation is placed in the hands of the professions and institutions that have already demonstrated an inability to cope with the problem. The basic approach of the economists of allocating more resources in standard ways is followed and we do more of the same that has not worked before.

There is at present a serious gap between the national desire to produce human change on a massive scale and the necessary educational, welfare, technological and manpower resources to meet this objective. More than money is needed, more than re-allocation of resources is needed; a change in approaches and methods is required.

Canada needs better methods of human and social development to achieve a just and equitable society; neither surveys nor armchair technique can create them. They can be developed only by means of action-research which conceives, develops, tests and evaluates various methods in real life situations among the poor. Experience with manpower retraining programs has proved that training, while necessary, is frequently not enough to enable the poor person to extricate himself from poverty. The multi-faceted problem of poverty must be attacked by an integrated and comprehensive program of services. This requires a marked change on the part of many social institutions currently providing single solutions based upon the methods of a single profession; there is a need to develop multi-disciplinary integrated programs to deal effectively with poverty.

The most appropriate concepts and techniques from education, social work, psychology and other behavioral sciences could be integrated into new types of programs far more effective than the single discipline approach of social agencies today. Today there is a growing awareness that sound mental health, the protection of society, and the education and welfare of all citizens, are intimately interrelated. Yet, in spite of this awareness, there still exists considerable separation between each of these approaches represented by different professional allegiances and different bodies of knowledge and theory. Although in each of the fields it is beginning to be recognized that human behavior is highly complex and cannot be dealt with in a piecemeal form, there have been few attempts to integrate the varying points of view. None of these approaches by itself is adequate to deal with the problems of poverty, nor is a mere composite of these theories and techniques enough - a new synthesis is needed.

The Life Skills Course of Saskatchewan NewStart represents a serious attempt to integrate educational and psychotherapeutic principles and techniques for the development of personal competence in many aspects of life. The Life Skills Course represents, therefore, not only a promising training/counselling technique but also a new model for human and social development programs. The effective implementation of the course requires that the agency - whether it be an educational, welfare or other institution - integrate social science concepts with those of organization management in its own operation.

The Life Skills Course teaches people mature and effective behaviors whereas most social institutions treat their clients as dependents, with an "Agency-Knows-Best" style of interaction. As the Life Skills students develop more competence, they assume increasing responsibility for self development and exercise the autonomy of mature adults. In many instances, they may negotiate with agency management for better or different services. The agency must welcome this independence and respond maturely to it. There is a need for agencies to develop Life Skills.

In the course of two years of intensive work on Life Skills, Saskatchewan NewStart has devoted 30 man-years to the development and testing of different theories and methods of the course. Some $300,000. in direct costs have been consumed in the work. Like many major development projects it has gone through several revisions. The first version was largely based on sensitivity training; this lead to too many distressful situations and too little behavior change. The second generation placed greater emphasis on skill objectives but in a frame of self-realization. The third generation emphasized the problem solving process as the skill objectives. It is this course that is described in this book.

At this time, three modifications of this course are being tested in the Saskatchewan NewStart Training Laboratory in Prince Albert:

1. A more didactic teaching style to compare its effectiveness in comparison with group process methods on the

disadvantaged whose own personal life style is more authoritarian.

2. Using the course as written, but slanting the teaching directly to youth to identify what changes might be necessary to use it with 17 to 21 year olds.

3. A "Skills Training" version. This is based on a behavioral analysis of the Life Skills lessons and each behavior is being taught, usually with the aid of videotape replay.

These versions and the regular course are being closely observed through one-way mirrors and will result in changes in the course. The new course will be tested along with two or three versions of it. Such is the process of development.

Saskatchewan NewStart will have a version available for widespread testing in the fall of 1971. By August 31, 1971, it will be able to provide:

1. Manuals on coach training.
2. An expanded version of this text.
3. The entire set of lessons (at least 65).
4. Multi-media kits of reference materials for students.
5. Videotaped lessons for use of coaches and students.

LIFE SKILLS IN MANPOWER TRAINING

- R. Himsl

The intensive studies of the sixties into the causes and nature of poverty enabled people to see the subject with better eyes. Until Oscar Lewis hinted at its complexity by coining the phrase, "the culture of poverty," much public opinion and policy concerning poverty depended upon economic interpretations. The economic view holds that the most distinctive feature of the disadvantaged is their lack of money: give people adequate jobs and poverty disappears. Whether or not one chooses to accept Lewis' concept of a culture of poverty, his suggestion of complications in the problem confronting the disadvantaged sounds a warning to those looking for simple and quick remedies.

The rapid post war growth of industry and business, both in size and diversity made the unsupported provision of jobs as a solution to the problem of poverty more and more difficult. Often, attempts to create jobs for people in a local area, were frustrated by the arrival of skilled people from other parts of the country who filled the newly created positions, leaving the prospects for the local residents relatively unchanged. Jobs alone, were not enough. Governments soon found that large segments of the population required additional trades

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training and up-grading to meet real and imposed pre-requisites for entry into trades, and they prepared to provide the needed training. Such training programs, simple in principle, but elaborate in design, indicate a shift in emphasis: the government which once saw the problem as an economic one and provided an appropriate solution, now saw the problem as an economic one, but one requiring a new component, training, in the heretofore purely economic solution.

As the government job training and up-grading programs became operational, the response of those who enrolled contained some surprises: total enrolments increased greatly, especially during the sixties, and yet people dropped from training before completion at disappointingly high rates. Why?

A look at manpower training from the point of view of the adult student yielded some helpful discoveries. Many disadvantaged, on returning to the training institution found themselves, incredibly enough, in a situation little changed from the one they had left many years before: the texts which they used to study were the very ones children used in their schools; often, the school made few adaptations to their adulthood, which served only to reinforce the inferiority they felt as a result of youthful failure; often lacking in communication skills, and equally lacking in confidence, they felt unable to convey their uncertainties to those in charge; sometimes, overcome with personal problems and unable to discuss them with people in an essentially inhospitable training environment, they chose the easy way out and stopped training. This response to training often fitted into the pattern of the individual's work history.

The disadvantaged person seemed to lack not only technical and vocational skills, but some kind of coping skills as well. If he could convey his uncertainties and dissatisfactions to those in charge in the school or at work, his communication might well have resulted in adjustment of the undesirable condition; had he described his personal problem adequately to a representative of a social agency, he might have found adequate short term assistance. If he had received some training in problem solving, he might well have examined other solutions to his problems as alternatives to quitting once more. The coping skills which these descriptions imply have been described as Life Skills.

A Skills Axis. If successful functioning in society depends upon two sets of skills, technical/vocational, or professional skills as one set, and personal problem solving skills as another set, it becomes possible to describe groups of people in terms of the presence or absence of these skills. In Fig. 1, the vertical line represents a range of problem solving life skills, with the extreme of no skills at the lower end of the line, and the extreme of many at the upper end. The horizontal line represents the salable technical/vocational, or professional skills. The left end of the line represents the point of complete absence of any salable skills, and the right end represents the possession of many salable skills.

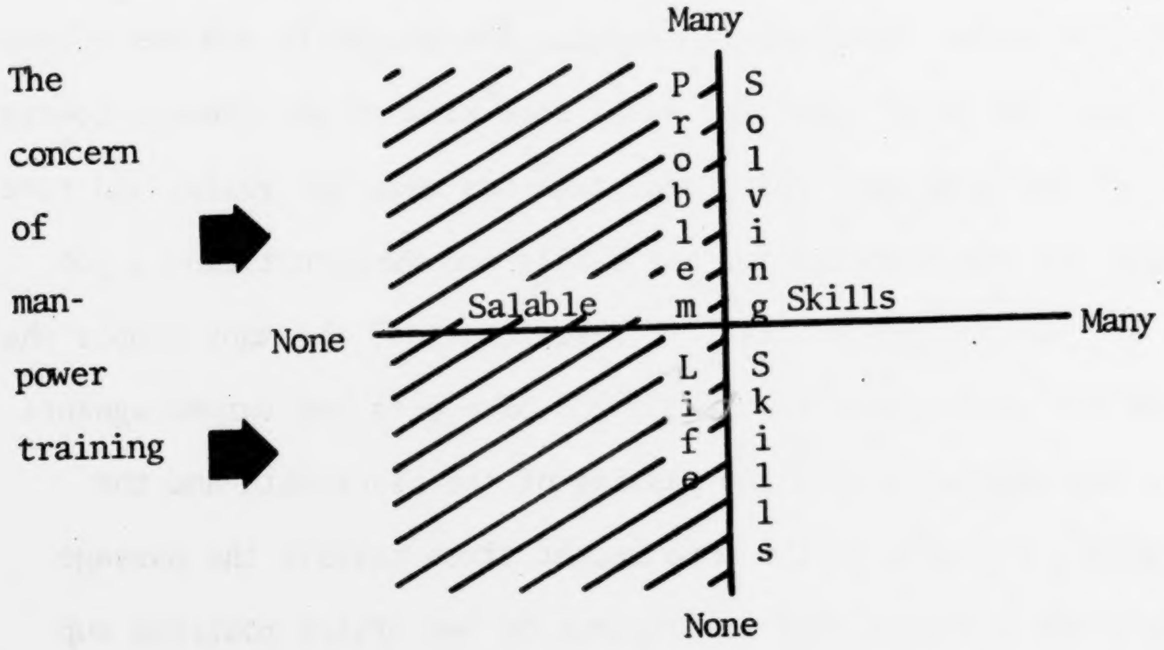
The concern of man-power training
Many
Problem
Solving
Salable
Skills
None
Many
Life
Skills
None

Fig. 1 A Skills Axis

Rough plottings demonstrate the kind of people in each quadrant of Fig. 1. Quadrant I for example, describes those people whom society sees generally as successful. They have salable skills, and seem to have many problem solving life skills. Quadrant I probably contains the mayor of the town, the union leader, the premier of the province, tradesmen, local professional people, or anyone who seems to have steady employment and who uses himself and the community well.

Quadrant II describes people who do not have many, or any salable skills, but who do seem to cope well with those problems life brings them. Perhaps Quadrant II contains the recent high school graduate, or even the recent university graduate, especailly if he took his degree in the liberal arts. Quadrant II contains the housewife who has raised her children, and still vigorous, seeks some kind of employment; however, she took her training many years ago; time has made her rusty, and tide has changed the requirements for her skills and she cannot find a job in which she can use her skills. It describes too, the many people who have faced the realization that the march of events had turned against them. Living memory recalls the passing of the blacksmith and the harness-maker; a search of the more recent times reveals the passage of the railroad fireman. The development of new office routines supported by electric and electronic calculators has reduced to an honor guard the host of clerks once required; the future promises more of the same. The personal problem solving skills of persons described by this quadrant of the diagram, may well enable them to develop new salable skills.

Quadrant III includes people whom we have come to describe as disadvantaged. They have few job opportunities because they lack any specialized skills, and they lack the personal problem solving skills which permit them to exploit, or indeed recognize the capabilities they have. Manpower training programs direct their efforts at people in Quadrants II and III; they have greatest success with people in Quadrant II.

The fourth quadrant includes people who have salable skills, but whose personal problems slowly grind away at their vigor. Every community has seen the wasting of a skilled mechanic or doctor unable to gain control over his thirst for alcohol. Often highly trained and talented people, their personal problems compounded by an inability to seek and use help, reduce their effectiveness, leading often to loss of job.

Characteristics of the Skills Axis. The usefulness of the skills axis increases if the user considers it relative to individuals; or to put it another way, if the user considers that each person has his own axis. This means that each person must determine for himself, in large part at least, what represents realizable goals for the development of his own problem solving capabilities, and for the development of salable skills. Each success or failure in life exacts a new interpretation of the axis for the person.

Quadrants II and IV represent situations of instability. The once usefully employed person, now unemployed because of changes in his world of work, typifies people in this quadrant. He must develop some salable skill or he will come to see himself as personally ineffective, and others may share that view; unless he possesses great strength of character, he may shift to the third quadrant enclosed by the skills axis. The development of salable skills, or the use of others which he already possesses, moves him of course, into Quadrant I.

Quadrant IV includes people likely struggling with a potentially harmful situation. Because they see themselves as lacking adequate problem solving life skills, or because they do in fact lack them, their effectiveness in the job probably decreases, and unless help comes to move them into the first quadrant, they may well slip into Quadrant III and complete or near complete dependence on others.

A Manpower Training Axis. The Skills Axis, descriptive in broad terms of the skills required for effective functioning in society, assists in the identification of training needs, and in the description of a complete manpower training program.

Traditionally, manpower training has concerned itself with the need described by the horizontal line, i.e., the need for training in marketable skills. Its main objective, therefore has been to move people horizontally, from left to right. In consequence, persons in Quadrant II move into Quadrant I, a desirable and stable situation; persons in Quadrant III move into Quadrant IV, perhaps temporarily productive, but essentially unstable employment situation, as shown in Fig. 2. Such a training program assumes one or all of a number of things about problem solving life skills: it may assume that people have problem solving life skills; or it may assume that they can learn these skills by themselves; or it may assume that economic effectiveness will eliminate the need for such skills; or

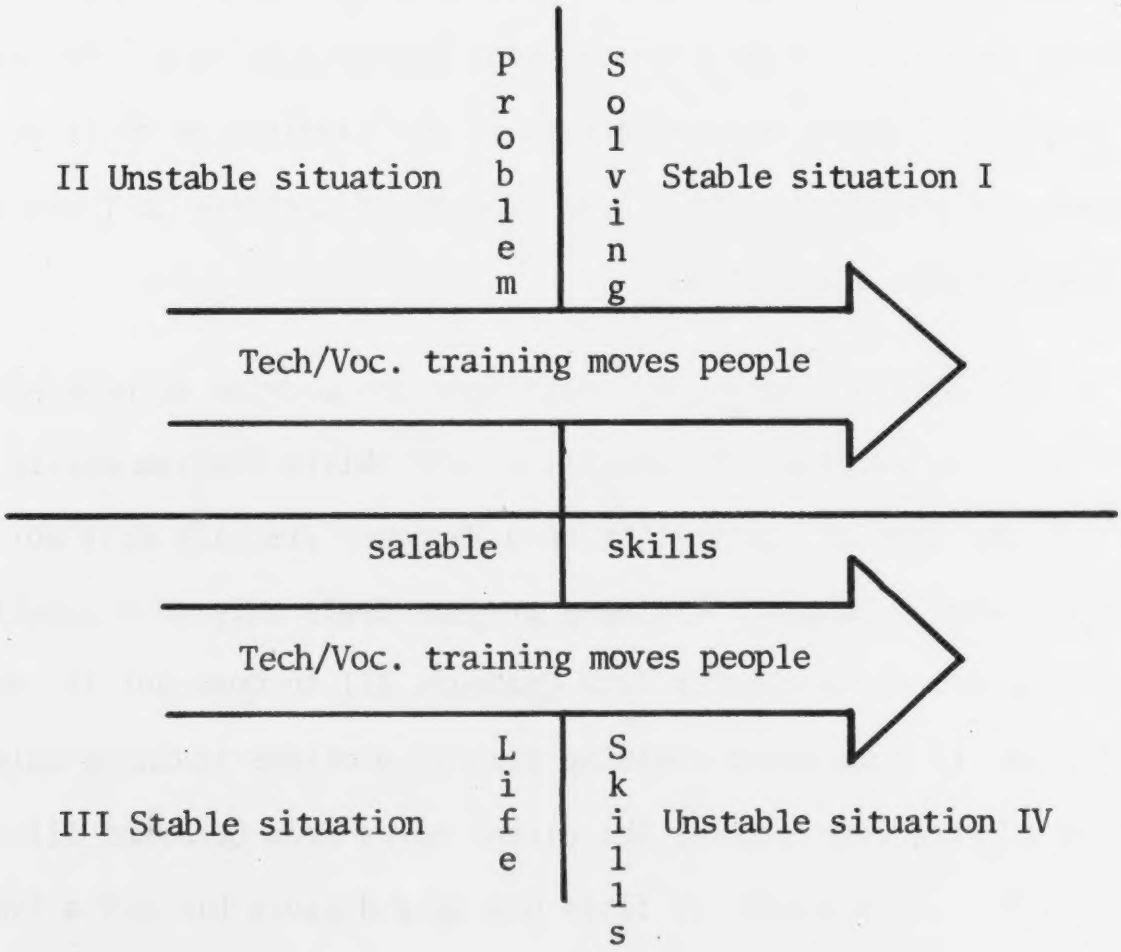
Problem
Solving
II Unstable situation
Stable situation I
Tech/Voc. training moves people
salable
skills
Tech/Voc. training moves people
Life
Skills
III Stable situation
Unstable situation IV

Fig. 2 The Typical Manpower Training Program

it may assume that people cannot become more effective in handling their personal problems.

A Life Skills Program implies that each of these assumptions is false in whole or in part. A Life Skills Program says that people can benefit from training in life skills because many people do not have problem solving life skills; they can learn them by themselves, but they can also learn them from others more effectively; economic effectiveness does not necessarily mean that people have many life skills; and people can become more effective in the handling of their personal problems. A purposive, structured program of training in these skills can hasten their acquisition.

A Life Skills Program by itself does not provide an adequate manpower training program. By itself, a Life Skills Program merely substitutes one form of instability on a Manpower Training Axis for another: when a manpower training program deals only with salable skills, it moves its clients from Quadrant III to Quadrant IV; on the other hand, if a manpower training program provides training only in problem solving life skills, the client moves from Quadrant III to Quadrant II. In a sense, it fires him up and gives him but a limited capability to do anything. Combined with the elements of the typical manpower training program however, the student has an opportunity to move from the stable, but undesirable Quadrant III of the Skills Axis to Quadrant II by virtue of his Life Skills training, and from Quadrant II to Quadrant I by virtue of his technical/vocational training, as shown in Fig. 3.

Academic Upgrading and the Skills Axis. Academic upgrading affects the person's movement along both axes. The sense of well being which follows academic achievement helps the individual place greater value on himself and prepares him for movement along the vertical axis. Achievement of an academic certificate, say a Grade X or Grade XII certificate, may well grant him admission to employment opportunities for which such

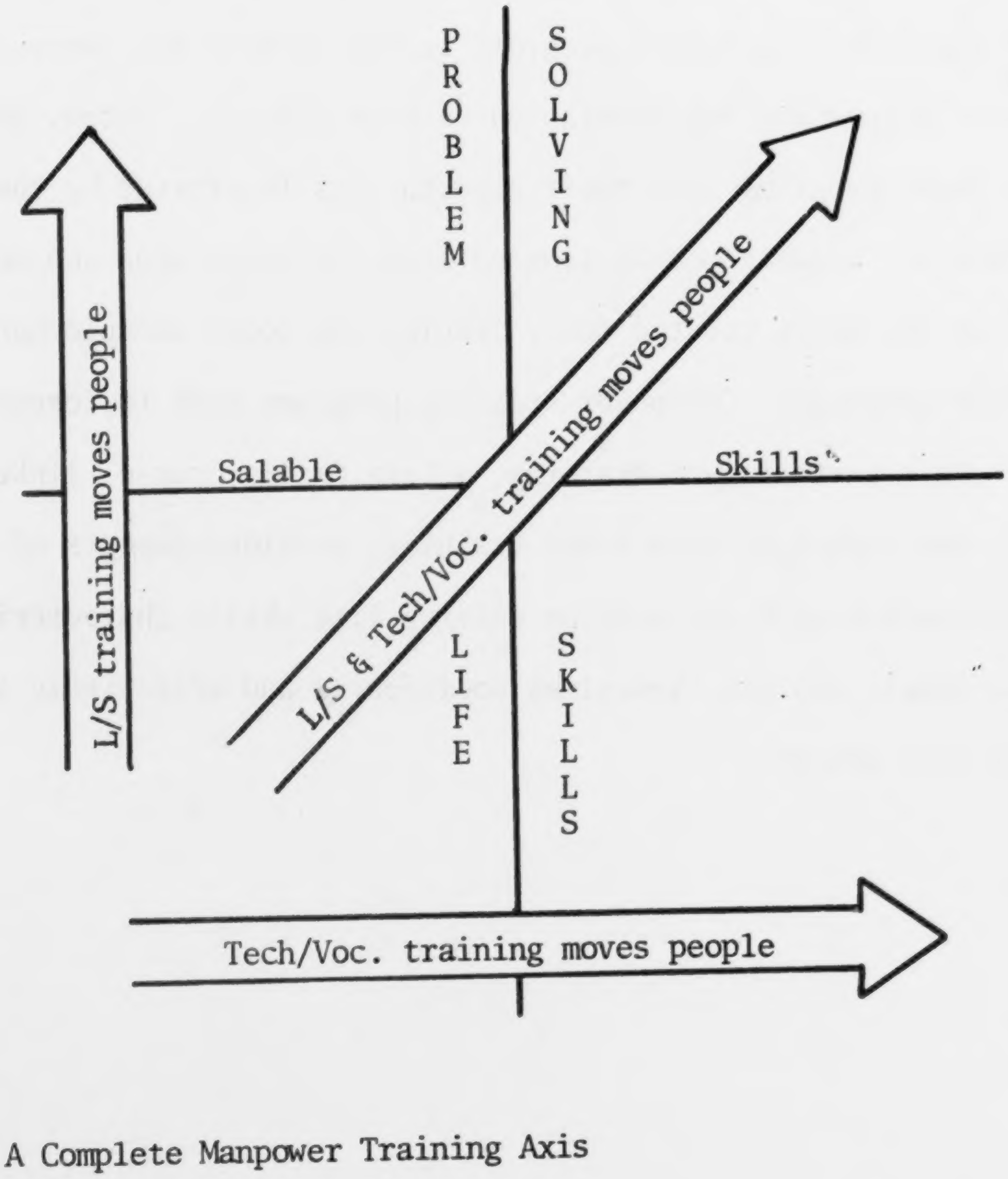
PROBLEM
SOLVING
L/S training moves people
L/S & Tech/Voc. training moves people
Salable
Skills
LIFE
SKILLS
Tech/Voc. training moves people

Fig. 3 A Complete Manpower Training Axis

certificate represented a minimum requirement, and so assist in his movement along the salable skills axis.

Summary. A Life Skills Course in applied problem solving strengthens the address which a manpower training program makes to its community. Governments have often attempted to restructure the local work environment to provide jobs for unemployed and the disadvantaged in particular areas. Industrial incentive programs in the form of tax concessions and direct grants are representative of such efforts. Often, the planners of these programs find their expectations frustrated by the arrival of aggressive, capable people from outside the local area who move in to take up the newly created jobs, leaving the local unemployment picture relatively unchanged. Manpower training programs seek to forestall this result. As a part of such training, a Life Skills Course, linked to academic and technical/vocational training, provides members of the local population with the problem solving life skills characteristic of those people who use themselves confidently and effectively in their contacts with others.

LIFE SKILLS: A COURSE IN APPLIED PROBLEM SOLVING

- R. Himsl

Many adults fail to handle effectively even those ordinary problems which life brings. A series of dreary events describes the result: early dropout from school, failure to find rewarding employment resulting in economic and social handicaps, a too early marriage with the addition of more problems and persistent economic ineffectiveness. Fed by this lack of accomplishment, feelings of inadequacy grow; and the people seeing themselves as failures in life, and excluded from opportunities offered others, develop a suspicion of authority personified in employers, representatives of government, policemen, teachers and the like. They develop antisocial attitudes which handicap them in holding jobs and advancing on the job. A sense of inadequacy and related inadequate behaviors become a part of the personality, obscuring even those very real strengths which they possess.

Life Skills Defined. Life Skills, precisely defined, means problem solving behaviors appropriately and responsibly used in the management of personal affairs. As problem solving behaviors, life skills liberate in a way, since they include a relatively small class of behaviors usable in many life situations. Applied appropriately, an individual adapts the behaviors to time and responsibly, the definition adds the requirement for maturity, or accountability. Finally, as behaviors used in the management of personal affairs, the life skills apply to five areas of life responsibility identified as self, family, leisure, community and job.

The Relevance of Life Skills. A description of the disadvantaged population establishes the relevance of life skills. Study of the literature, and direct observation reveals that many disadvantaged have a complex, interlocking set of inadequate behaviors. Some lack the skills needed to identify problems, to recognize and organize relevant information, to describe reasonable courses of action, and to foresee the consequences; they often fail to act on a rationally identified course of action, submitting rather to actions based on emotion or authority. Often they do not benefit from their experience since they do not evaluate the results of their actions, once taken, displaying fatalistic rationalizations of the consequences. They lack the self-confidence necessary to develop their own abilities, and have low, or often surprisingly unrealistic aspiration levels.

Many disadvantaged have low levels of participation in the society surrounding them, and typically, few belong to voluntary organizations; the affairs of the larger society do not attract their participation They lack effective ways of seeking help from each other and from agencies already in existence, although some form of public assistance provides much of their income. Long periods of unemployment, or frequent short time jobs mark their work history. They have ineffective interpersonal relationships and lack basic communication skills; they do not use feedback effectively, often thinking of it as hurtful personal criticism. As a result of characteristic marital instability, women often raise the children by themselves. Alcoholism and use of drugs blight the lives of others. Many find their lives beset by combinations of more than one such handicap.

Assumptions About Life Skills. A course aimed at training people in the life skills, implies certain assumptions. In order to have a Life Skills Course, the life skills must exist as identifiable and describable behaviors. In addition, the assumption that the skills can be trained requires that some people already have these skills and that they can demonstrate them; others can imitate them, and through practice, apply them in their own life situations, changing their behaviors from what they once were, and so, learn. The situations which compose the training, necessarily consist of samples of life; this limitation rests on the assumption that students transfer their skills from the life situation simulated in the training, to the problem situations encountered in their own lives.

THE LIFE SKILLS COURSE

In achieving its objective, the Life Skills Course provides the students with competence in the use of problem solving skills to manage their personal affairs as suggested by the terms, self, family, leisure, community and job. The Life Skills students make themselves more effective by practising those interpersonal skills which they lack because of an accident of birth, failure of environment, or rejection, for whatever reason, of the opportunities provided by society. The practice and related studies assist the student to see his strengths, and provide him with a realistic and hopeful assessment of his weaknesses. Although the training in the course concentrates on behaviors, it does not discount the effects that these new found competencies have on the attitudes of the adult student toward himself and those around him.

Assumptions About Methodology. To achieve the objective, the student starts at his present level or style of behavior and increases his array of effective behaviors to the point where he can handle the complications of living a productive and satisfying life. He practises specific, identifiable skills of problem solving in life situations. The ability of the student to apply these specific, goal directed behaviors enables him to refashion a picture of himself as a person with demonstrated abilities, and as a person with a new value to himself and those around him. Obviously then, the Life Skills Course uses two truisms as the source of its methodology: first, learning starts at the learner's current level of functioning and his understanding of present reality and second, the attainment of long range goals requires the mastery of many specific intervening goals, whose integration by the individual leads to an apparent and significant behavioral change.

The Concept of Skill in Life Skills. The Life Skills Course recognizes that true learning, behavioral change, occurs when the learner has a clear understanding of his goals, a clear description of the new behavior, and an understanding of those conditions which make the behavior acceptable, or unacceptable. The concept of these new sought-for behaviors as skills, makes a happy fit with the recognition of learning as changed behavior. A learner by definition, is one who seeks behavioral change. A skill has those characteristics which have great appeal to him: skills have the connotation of clarity in description; they have a definite purpose; they have certain standards by which people judge their acceptability or unacceptability. One need only think of such a simple expression of skill as the making of an omelette to expose the attractive qualities of the concept of skill development as a means of accomplishing changed behavior, and for the Life Skills Course, skill development requires an activity program based on practical application of the learnings.

A Life Skills Course Defined. The Life Skills Course achieves its goal in a learning group composed of about ten students and their learning guide, called a coach. The coach has received special training in techniques appropriate to the course. He has skills which he uses to develop the learning situation described in the lesson, the fundamental Life Skills unit. During the course, the students participate in about 65 of these lessons, the exact number depending in part upon the requirements of the students. The coach has four main sources which he encourages his students to exploit in their search for meaningful behavioral change: he has the resources, the skills and experiences which the students themselves bring to the learning group; he has his own experiences and training; he has the resources of the community on which he can call; and he has the written materials which set out the content, the intervening goals for behavioral change, and the final course goal of developing effective, problem solving individuals. In sum, a Life Skills Course consists of the coach and his training, the student and his experiences in his community, and the written materials containing the content and course objectives.

The Content of the Life Skills Course. Five categories of life generated the content for the Life Skills Course: Self, Family, Leisure, Community and Job. An examination of the students' life experiences using these categories, produced a number of typical problem situations which lent themselves to development as learning experiences for the students. In the area of Self for example, study showed that the students often had distorted views of themselves: they exaggerated their lack of skills or they had little understanding of their abilities relative to other people; they showed apprehension in non-threatening situations; they allowed other people to dominate them. The Life Skills Lessons dealing with Self address these problems and others of a like nature.

In the area of Family, the students showed similar lack of simple skills: for example, they did not discipline their children consistently, sometimes resorting to severe corporal punishment, at one extreme, and bribery for good behavior at the other; they knew little of the need for planning for the care of their survivors in the event of death; many lacked the skills to give their children helpful information about sex; often, they failed to come to mutually satisfactory solutions to quarrels in marriage. Again, a number of typical problem situations lent themselves to adaptation of a Life Skills lesson.

An examination of their life style from the point of view of Leisure identified another set of problems. Typically, the Life Skills student had a limited array of leisure time activities. For many, alcohol dominated in one way or another, much of their leisure time activity. The Life Skills Course responds to this limited use of leisure time by providing the student with experiences in which he exploits the wider range of activities which his community provides.

In the area of Community, students typically showed limited participation in the life of the larger society. Few had memberships in any voluntary agency. Many ran afoul of the representatives of the community agencies: all had dropped out of school, long before graduation; many have police records; some spent time in penal institutions. Problems typical of these situations provide the basis for structuring Life Skills lessons in the Community area.

Consideration of the area related to the Job showed that the students often had little knowledge of the means which many people use to find employment. They had only vague notions of what employers wanted in the way of maintaining effective working relations on the staff. Many did not accept criticism well, and found that when called upon to give it to others, say as a part of a supervisory responsibility, they could not do it. Typically, many of the Life Skills students do not know how to present themselves in the most favorable light; they fail to give a full account of their work experience, or if they do give it, they present it badly. Others experience frustration because they have set unrealistic employment goals for themselves. The lessons of the Life Skills Course dealing with the area of Job examine problem situations of this sort.

The course provides a pre-planned set of experiences in which the students apply problem solving techniques to the lessons suggested by the problems in these five areas; however, the students also bring to the Life Skills groups an array of personal problems unique to them. When these problems lend themselves to handling in the Life Skills group, they become a part of the course proper.

The Life Skills Process. The Life Skills Course integrates three process dimensions, encouraging the adult student to use the course content described above, in each of the three process dimensions: a knowledge dimension, a "student use of group dimension," and a problem solving dimension.

The Knowledge Dimension. In responding along the first of these dimensions, i.e., the knowledge dimension, the student may react first in any one of its three domains, the cognitive, the affective, or the psychomotor. If he reacts in the cognitive or knowing domain, for example, he may rephrase a sentence in his own words. He may summarize the happenings of a lesson; if so, he might combine the rather simple cognitive, or knowing, act of recalling, with the more complex act of synthesizing. He may relate the discussion in a lesson to an experience in his home life thereby contracting and comparing. He may link the items in one lesson to those in another, thereby showing relationships. Any manipulation of course content such as repetition or recall of content, explanation, analysis, application, synthesis or evaluation, represents a cognitive or knowing response.

Students also respond on this dimension with affect or feeling. This affective response may occur before, at the same time, or after the cognitive or knowing response; indeed, it may be characteristic of the disadvantaged to hold knowledge in low esteem, in which case the initial reaction might well occur in the affective domain. Whatever the exact sequence, the Life Skills Course recognizes the affective reaction and encourages its expression and control. The coach encourages the students, and gives them direct assistance and example in the expression of feeling. At the worst, unexpressed or suppressed feelings inhibit the development of behavioral change and prevent the student from facing himself and others. At best, expressed feelings open the student to new understandings of those around him, helping him recognize that others have the same fears and uncertainties he has, and yet, manage to function in spite of it. Furthermore, the student soon comes to the realization that the mere expression of feelings often assists in controlling them. The range of a student's affective response is wide: at one extreme, for example, he may blurt that some things look stupid to him, and reject lessons by walking out, or he may participate passively. At the other extreme, he may speak "loyally" of the group and the activities of the lessons; he may defend the activities of the course and the group against outside criticism and enthusiastically tell others what he has learned. Though such expressions demand a great deal of the coach, he responds quickly to them, helping the members of the group accept their own feelings and those of others.

When the student responds in the third category of behaviors, the psychomotor or acting category, he uses his body: he may stand up, move about as required in trust exercises, go onto the street to conduct interviews, go with his group on excursions, demonstrate new behaviors to others, draw a self portrait, or participate in role playing situations.

The student's psychomotor responses often provide the most obvious evidence of his full participation in the activities of the lesson. His cognitive, or knowing manipulation of the content provide him with a necessary "factual" base; his affective, or feeling response to content expresses his will to face the consequences of the new knowledge and its effect on him; his psychomotor response represents his commitment to action.

Though these categories provide a basic dimension on which to describe student response to the course content (see Figure 1), not every lesson requires equal response from them; most lessons, however, require some response from the student in each of these broad categories.

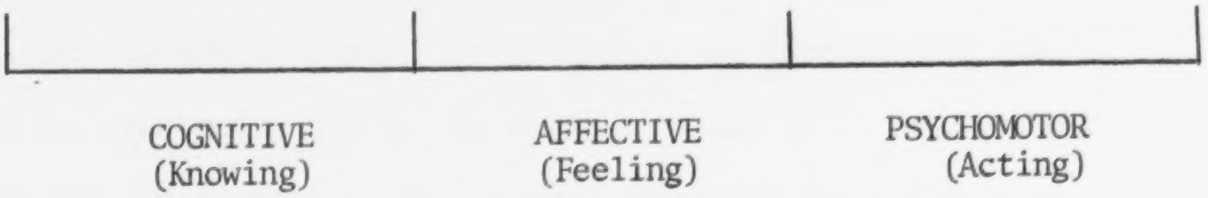

Fig. 1 Student Response to Content

The Student Use of Group Dimension. The second, or Student Use of Group dimension, describes the purpose of the learning group. The student uses the group to practise new behaviors. He uses feedback and criticism from the group to modify behaviors new to him. He studies individuals in his group as models for new behaviors, and he uses the group as a setting in which to develop his skills of self expression. The group affects its members most when they have developed a strong sense of mutual trust and an interest in helping each other through the lessons. The group provides both acceptance and challenge, and seeks an essential balance between the two: all acceptance makes everyone feel good, but stunts improvement in skills and development of problem solving capabilities; all challenge makes people react defensively and become more set in ineffective behaviors.

Students respond at three rather distinct levels on this dimension. At a first level of group use, the student continues interpersonal behaviors which in the past have met his needs. If previously withdrawn, for example, at a first or safe level of response he continues this; if bullying, he continues this, or if he tried always to harmonize the group activities in the past he continues this. At a second level of group use, the level of careful group use, he ventures into the practice of behaviors new to him. He models his new behaviors after those of the coach and other members of the group. He draws the attention of other group members to this new behavior, seeking support and acknowledgement. At the upper edge of this level of behavior, he tries the behavior with strangers. At the third level of development, the level of risky group use, he asks directly for criticisms of the new behaviors, seeking to refine them and make them more effective.

He gives feedback to others on their own behavior without fear or malice. He ventures opinion which he knows others in the group might find unacceptable or startling from him. He expresses strong feelings to other members of the group, or he objects to some procedures the coach has used. At the level of risky group use, he may participate in role playing a situation quite new to him.

The student then, has three levels of activity in the learning group: the level of safe group use, the level of careful group use, and the level of risky group use. These add to each other: behaviors characteristic of the third level do not replace those of the second or the first level, nor do those in the second level replace those of the first level. The student retains the safe group use behaviors because they serve him well; to assist him in his necessary learnings, the coach encourages him to add to his behaviors the more venturesome ones characteristic of the two upper levels.

The model now has a second dimension, (see Figure 2). The more effective the learner, the more he uses all responses named on the horizontal axis, and the more he uses the behavioral categories named on the vertical axis.

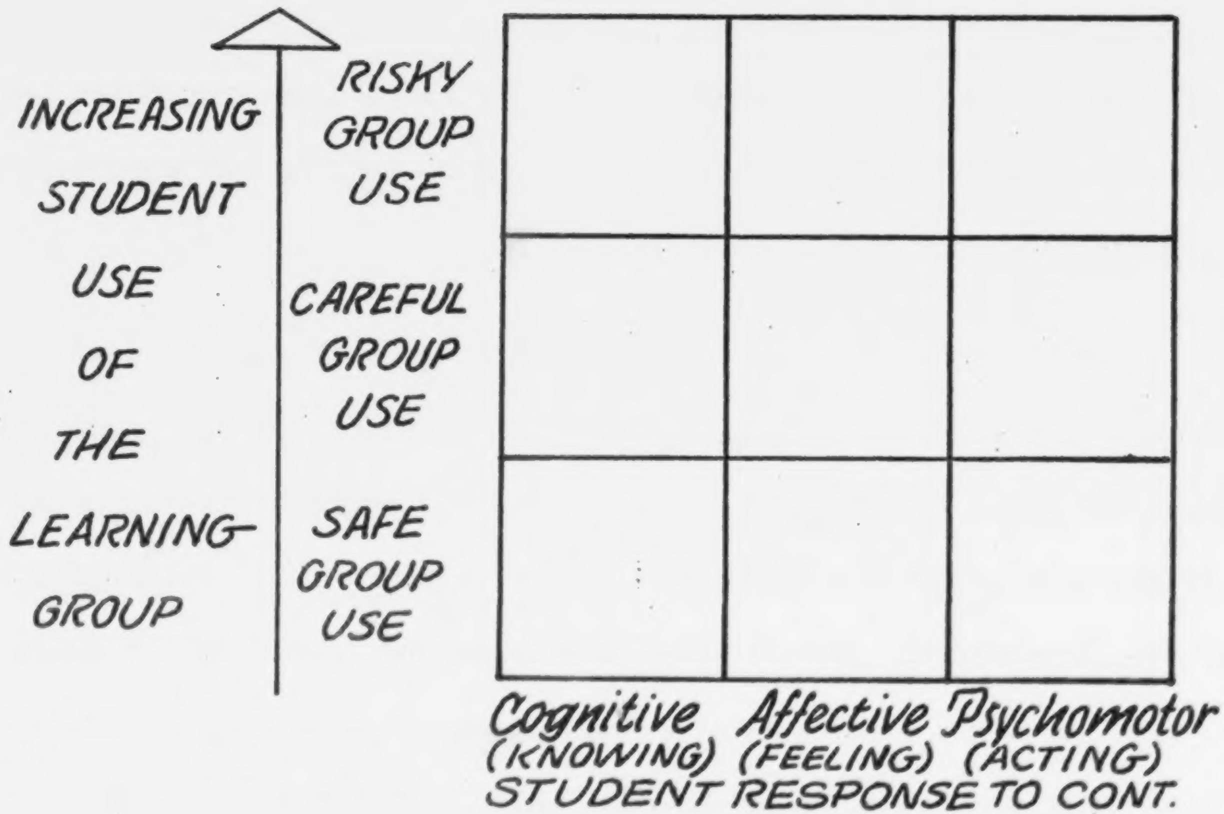
INCREASING
STUDENT
USE
OF
THE
LEARNING
GROUP
RISKY
GROUP
USE
CAREFUL
GROUP
USE
SAFE
GROUP
USE
Cognitive
(KNOWING)
Affective
(FEELING)
Psychomotor
(ACTING)
STUDENT RESPONSE TO CONT.

FIG. 2 - THE DIMENSIONS OF STUDENT RESPONSE TO CONTENT AND USE OF THE LEARNING GROUP

The Problem Solving Dimension. The learner could use both the knowledge and student use of group dimensions to their fullest, and still achieve none of the objectives of the Life Skills Course. The complete Life Skills Process/Content Model requires a third dimension. The Life Skills student uses a whole array of problem solving behaviors. In gross terms, he recognizes a problem situation, defines a problem, chooses an alternative solution, implements it, and evaluates the result;

of course, each of these processes contains, many sub-processes. As he matures in the course, the student increases the array of the problem solving behaviors he uses, until ideally, he uses all of them as the situation requires. This array of behavior provides the third dimension. Figure 3 represents the complete process model.

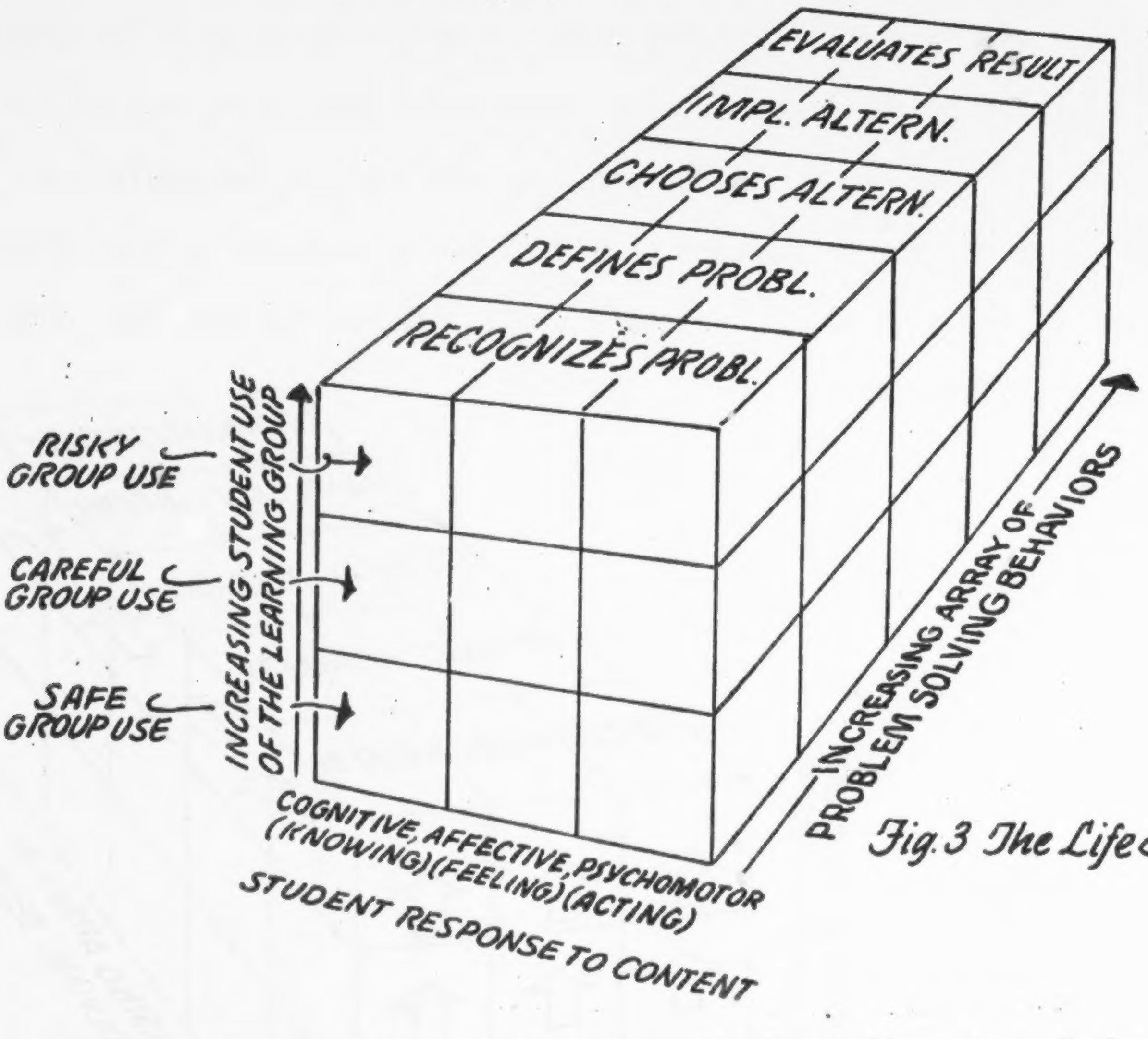
EVALUATES RESULT
IMPL. ALTERN.
CHOOSES ALTERN.
DEFINES PROBL.
RECOGNIZES PROBL.
RISKY GROUP USE
CAREFUL GROUP USE
SAFE GROUP USE
INCREASING STUDENT USE OF THE LEARNING GROUP
INCREASING ARRAY OF PROBLEM SOLVING BEHAVIORS
COGNITIVE, AFFECTIVE, PSYCHOMOTOR
(KNOWING)(FEELING)(ACTING)
STUDENT RESPONSE TO CONTENT

Fig. 3 The Life Skills Process Model

In summary, as the student uses the first dimension of the Life Skill process to manipulate course content, he comes to know it in the cognitive domain; he reacts to it emotionally in the affective domain, that is, he feels toward it; and in every lesson, the student reacts behaviorally by doing something about it. As he exploits the second dimension, the student uses the help of the group to develop a knowing or cognitive use of content; he uses the group to express and control his feeling response and he acts, becoming more involved as learning increases. Finally, the student applies problem solving skills to the lesson content, using an increasing array of skills to do so. The ideal student responds to the course content knowingly, feelingly, and by action; he uses the group to refine his response to the content; he applies a complete range of problem solving skills to the situations in the content. The arrows in Figure 4 show how a Life Skills student handles the content of the Life Skills Course.

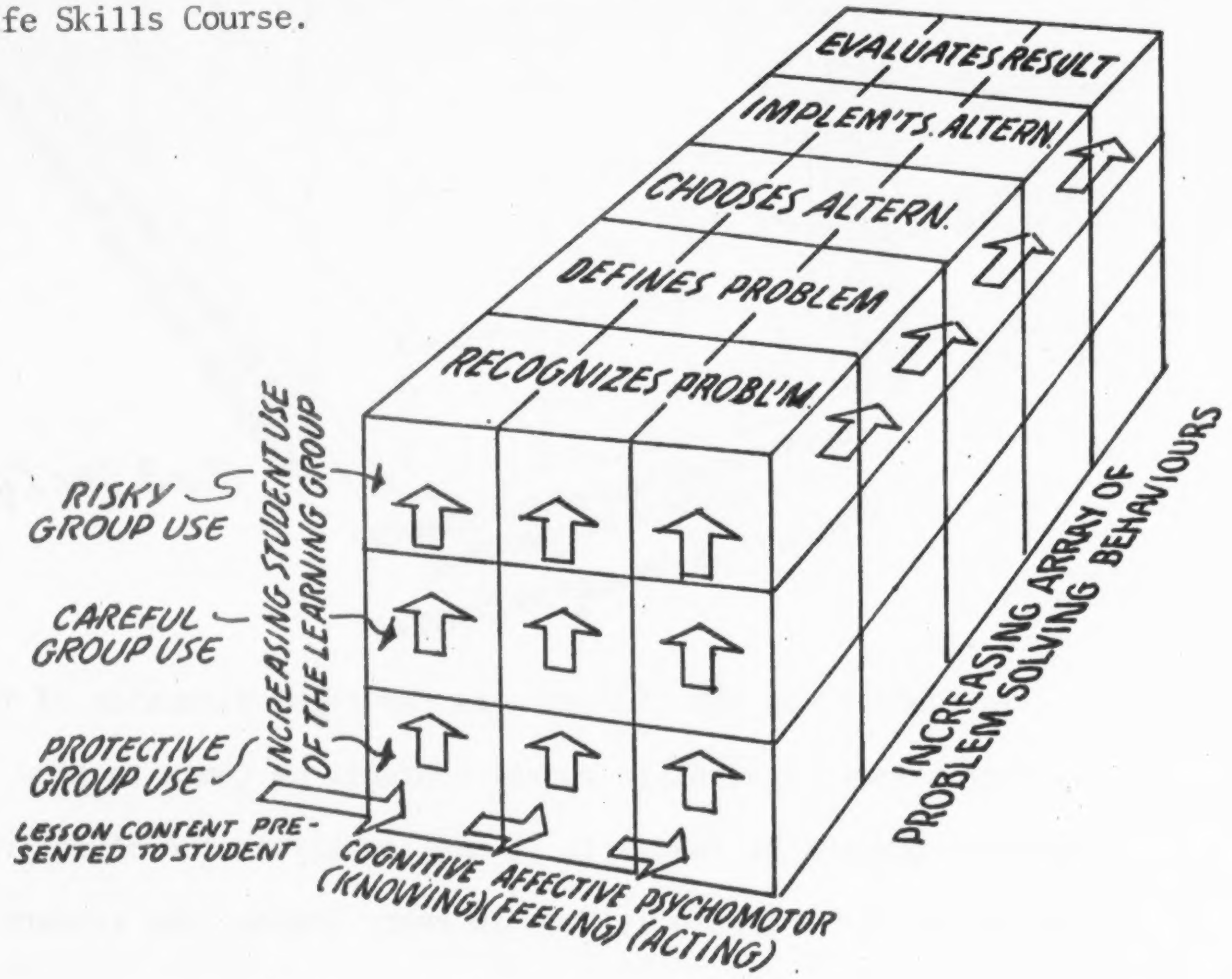
EVALUATES RESULT
IMPLEM'TS. ALTERN.
CHOOSES ALTERN.
DEFINES PROBLEM
RECOGNIZES PROBL'M.
INCREASING STUDENT USE OF THE LEARNING GROUP
RISKY GROUP USE
CAREFUL GROUP USE
PROTECTIVE GROUP USE
LESSON CONTENT PRESENTED TO STUDENT
COGNITIVE (KNOWING)
AFFECTIVE (FEELING)
PSYCHOMOTOR (ACTING)
INCREASING ARRAY OF PROBLEM SOLVING BEHAVIOURS

Fig. 4 The Life Skills Process/Content Model

The Use of Process in the Life Skills Course.

Unlike many "education" programs, and more like many training programs, success of the Life Skills Course requires that students make effective transfer of their problem solving skills. While the problem solving process subsumes all the life skills, the persons using the life skills course, must concern themselves with the process which subsumes all others in the life skills course; that of transfer of skills from the training centre to everyday life.

Doubtless, the process of transfer of training subsumes many subtle integrations of new knowledge, judgements by the person making the transfer as to the consequences of changing his behavior in different settings, reconciliations of uncertainties, and many others, actions unobservable, and infinite in variety. The life skills course provides each student with an opportunity to participate in all of the following processes, each one subsumed by the succeeding one, and all subsumed by the transfer process: accepting training; committing oneself to the group and its activities; observing the demonstration of a new skill; practising a new skill in the group; discussing the practice of the new skill; practising the new skill outside the group; practising the new skill after the completion of the course; incorporation of the new skill into one's behavior pattern; teaching the new skill to another person.

Fig. 5 summarizes these processes and includes certain speculations about processes in the cognitive and affective domains. Fig. 5 implies that movement down the page, and across the page from left to right, increases the commitment to adoption. As a corollary to this statement, the more the behaviors appear in the psychomotor domain, as shown in Fig. 5, the greater the conviction the coach has that the students can make effective transfer. It necessarily follows then, that the students must manifest a disposition to change by practising the new behaviors. All connected with the course implementation must ensure that all students receive encouragement to apply the new behaviors, and support in their performances when they do so.

The evaluation of the effectiveness of the Life Skills Course depends to a great extent on observation of student behavior, as suggested in Fig. 5. Fig. 5 does not show any conceptualization that must take place, beyond that required to make some accommodation to the new behavior. In addition to that accommodation, the student must approach, in greater or lesser degree, the concepts on which the life skills course depends. Effective transfer requires development of the conceptual base in the mind of the student; lacking that, the stupid behavior already owned by the student, becomes a different stupid behavior, marked with the same persistence.

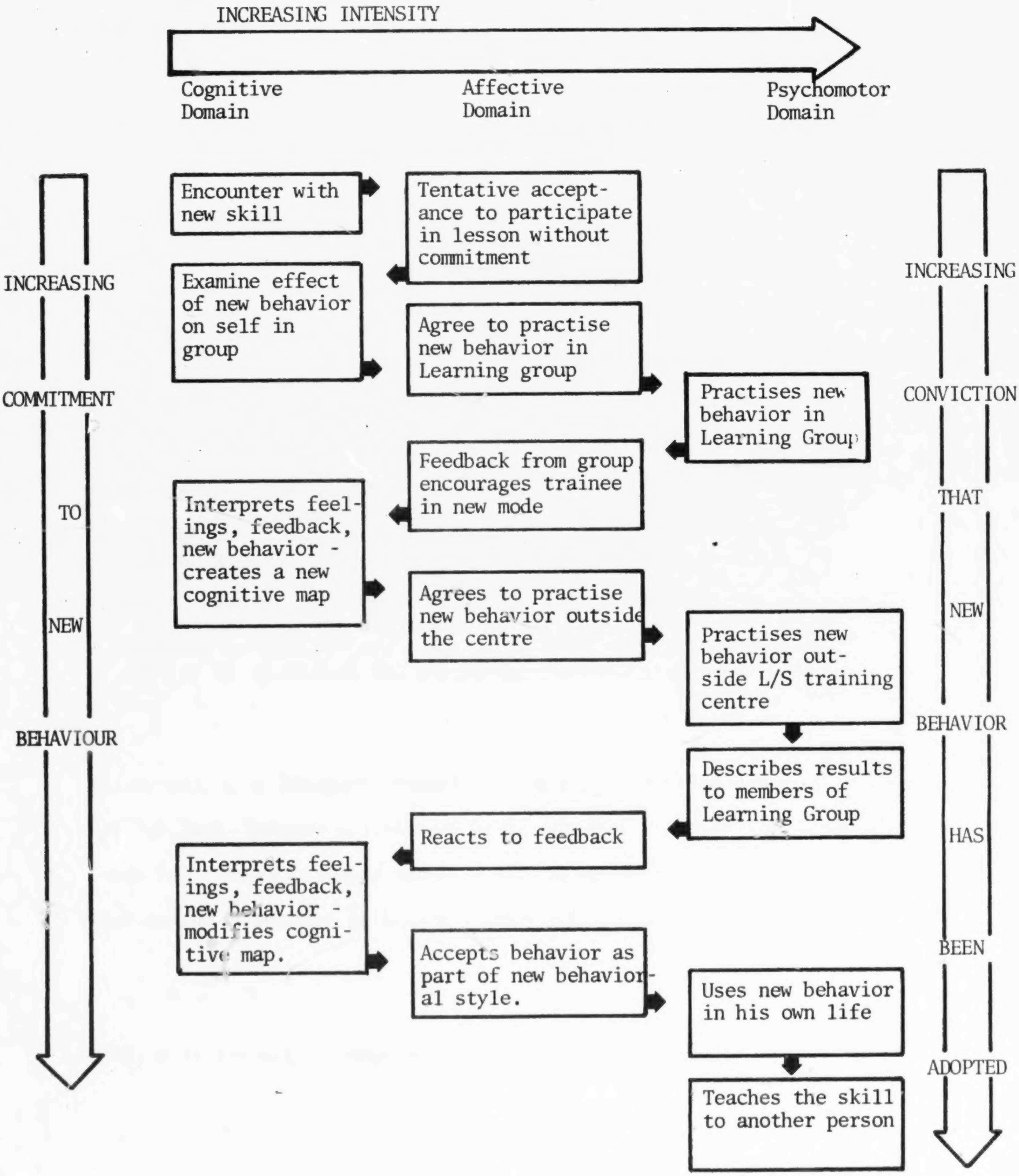
INCREASING INTENSITY
Cognitive Domain
Affective Domain
Psychomotor Domain
INCREASING COMMITMENT TO NEW BEHAVIOUR
Encounter with new skill
Tentative acceptance to participate in lesson without commitment
Examine effect of new behavior on self in group
Agree to practise new behavior in Learning group
Practises new behavior in Learning Group
Feedback from group encourages trainee in new mode
Interprets feelings, feedback, new behavior - creates a new cognitive map
Agrees to practise new behavior outside the centre
Practises new behavior outside L/S training centre
Describes results to members of Learning Group
Reacts to feedback
Interprets feelings, feedback, new behavior - modifies cognitive map.
Accepts behavior as part of new behavioral style.
Uses new behavior in his own life
Teaches the skill to another person
INCREASING CONVICTION THAT NEW BEHAVIOR HAS BEEN ADOPTED

Fig. 5. Diagrammatic representation of the development of the skill transfer process.

LIFE SKILLS: FROM CONCEPT TO LESSON PLAN

- Mary Jean Martin

The Origins of the Life Skills Course

> Larry is 40, married with 6 children. He lives in a three-room semi-modern house. He has been a good worker but goes on drinking sprees occasionally and has been fired from his last three jobs. Sally is 21. At four she was placed in a foster home and has been in six foster homes since. At 17 she became a mother. After struggling to look after her child on her own, she gave him up for adoption. Jane is 35, married, with eight children. Her husband has only seasonal work. She decided she'd like to help out with the bills but couldn't find a job. She has seldom been out in public and is very shy. John is 50, a laborer with an excellent work record. His seven children have all done well in school. Recently his health has failed and he must find a less strenuous job. Harry, 35 with three children, lives common-law. He has spent a total of 12 years in prisons. Doreen, 24, deserted by her husband, has three pre-school children. Mary, 31, divorced with one child, is trying to kick the drug habit. Fred, 18 and single, has never held a job for more than few weeks even though he knows all about everything; he owes $3,000. Paul is 27, single and just out on parole. He is motivated to change his ways. He wants a job and a girl as fast as possible. Pete is 19, sorry he quite school and now anxious to go on with his education.

The above history describes ten students enrolled in a Life Skills Course. What problems does the brief description expose? What skills do members have? What needs do the students have in common? Can they achieve a Grade 10 and acquire stable, rewarding employment unless their

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problems are dealt with? Will basic education alone help them acquire stable, rewarding employment? In what ways can these students overcome their problems? Who can help? Can a training program find ways to deal directly with these problems? Can it afford not to? The need for something like Life Skills was recognized early in the life of Saskatchewan NewStart. Staff with backgrounds in Welfare, Education, Public Health and the Armed Forces, remembering case histories of former clients asked questions like these.

Following a search of the literature and visits to projects and consultants in Canada and the United States, the idea of a course dealing with specific life problems gained importance and promise. Group methods of training showed success in many projects. Counselling, of course, was planned from the beginning, but the staff questioned the effectiveness of "professional" counsellors, including themselves. The use of lay counsellors, or "coaches", as they have come to be called, promised a way of bridging the gap between the client and the professional.

The Use of Consultants. The term "Life Skills" appeared in the literature from the TRY project (Training Resources for Youth) carried out in the Bedford - Stuyvesant area of New York City. In November, 1968, Drs. W. Adkins and S. Rosenberg, formerly of the TRY staff, served as consultants to the Life Skills course development team. Beginning with their course outline, specifications for a course were drawn up and the job of curriculum development contracted to another consultant firm. In quick succession, NewStart staff recruited students for the first test of the program, hired lay persons for the coaching staff, and gave them a short training program in group methods.

First Version of the Life Skills Course. The first Life Skills course at Saskatchewan NewStart began in February, 1969. Observations showed students enthusiastic about the lessons, eager to assess their past lives and try new ways to solve their problems. The coaches established an easy rapport with the students, with their enthusiasm sparking student interest. Observations also showed many shortcomings: with six groups and six coaches, different things happened in each of the different groups -- some good, many questionable. The lessons, although holding promise, lacked direction for the coach to guide the group toward the intended outcomes. The group methods created interest, but students lacked knowledge and skill to carry out decisions. Were the lessons at fault? Was the lack of skill in reaching the objectives a fault of the coach or of the lesson guide? What training would provide a coach with the necessary skills? How could lesson plans be written to help the coach?

Lesson Redevelopment. In April, 1969, staff began to revise the written course outline to clarify the intent; however, it soon became evident that a successful course needed more than this. Students from the first group were interviewed to verify the real problems they faced and to help evaluate the program. With help from the consultants, the problems and needs of students were again analyzed and new specifications drawn up. By August, 1969, nine people, including three coaches and their supervisor, were involved in the writing. They entered a "creative stage" sketching ideas for some seventy lessons.

Beginning in January, 1970, these lessons were tested. The lessons were implemented by two of the coaches under the watchful eye of observers. Each lesson was monitored through one-way glass and discussed with the coaches at the end of the day. Revisions were made for the third coach who tested this lesson the following day. Thus three tests of each lesson were made.

In April, 1970, notes made during the test period were used to begin a further revision of the lessons. Group support, overemphasized in the first test, was now too weak; an effective lesson needed a balance between the two extremes. Students lacked sufficient practise in the skill objectives; more opportunity for practice was written into the lessons and more powerful activities in which to apply the skills were planned. The course objectives called for skills of the self-confident, self-actualizing man. Were these realistic objectives? The course developers discovered that though the course stressed problem solving processes, problem solving had been overlooked as the main objective. The staff considered the implications of problem solving objectives: they were practical, transferable, and identifiable. Study during the next few weeks, clarified the basic concepts of the course in terms of the problem solving objectives and twenty lessons were revised; the test of these lessons, during July and August, yielded rewarding results. Development based on these concepts continues.

Development of the coach training program has paralled the lesson development, and as it approaches a more fully conceptualized stage, plans are underway for a test of the complete Life Skills Course early in 1971.

The Life Skills Course

Overview The overall objective for the course now reads, "The student applies problem solving behaviors appropriately and responsibly in the management of his personal affairs." The course has five phases, corresponding to the five phases named in the problem solving model: recognition of the problem, definition of the problem, choice of an alternative, application and evaluation. The content derives from the needs of the students; first, to develop a readiness for learning and to develop a learning group in which new behaviors can be tried and accepted, and then from typical problems drawn from related areas of life described by the terms, self, family, leisure, community and job. In the first two phases, the problem solving behaviors practised help the student respond appropriately and responsibly in the management of the here-and-now real life situation, the group and the training centre. In the next three phases, this continues but expands to encompass the problems confronting the student in his life outside the centre.

Phase I. In the first phase of the course, the awareness or recognition phase in problem solving terms, the student becomes aware of what the course offers; he comes to see himself in a new way; he comes to see that he can change life situations, and deal with problems. In the first lesson, for example, he interviews another student and then introduces him to the group; he takes part in a non-verbal exercise to get to know his fellow group members; he takes part in a cooperation game to discover how his behavior affects the completion of a group task. From the beginning he finds himself involved in a course that will not let him sit back, listen and take notes.

Through the lessons that follow, he is helped to examine assumptions about himself, things he may have taken for granted; he studies himself on video-tape, perhaps discovering he appears more effective than he thought, or indeed that when he thought he was not involved, non-verbal cues spoke volumes to others; he learns to express feelings, and he sees that others feel as he does, that he is not alone in his fears and his doubts; he learns to give and receive feedback, and he learns the value of it.

At the end of this first phase, the student reviews the Life Skills Check List completed in an earlier lesson. He selects skills he wants to develop and sets a goal for himself.

The titles of the lessons of the first phase, Recognition of a Problem Situation, follow:

1. Meeting One Another
2. Surveying Life Skills
3. Relating Behaviors to Roles
4. Seeing Oneself on Video
5. Relating to Others
6. Describing Feelings
7. Giving and Receiving Feedback
8. Depending on Others
9. Recognizing the Problem Situation
10. Explaining Life Skills to Others

Phase II. In the second phase, corresponding to the definition of a problem stage of problem solving, the processes of phase one continue, but are made more explicit. In the first lesson, the student studies the film, "The Eye of the Beholder" to identify assumptions about interpersonal behaviors. He examines biases he may have towards his fellow group members or those others see him display; he discovers how these get in the way of communication, and how, with more complete information about another, some of the biases fall away.

In the next lessons, the student draws his self-portrait, gives a talk and writes tests, gaining more information about himself. He struggles with a system of problem solving behaviors and uses them to plan leisure time activities. In other lessons he works on his contribution to the learning group. He looks at his family, identifying strengths. He debates the topic, "To Work or Not to Work," examining his assumptions about work and defining the problem in personal terms.

In the lesson Setting Goals, the specific objectives read, "the student sets a goal to accomplish in the Life Skills Course," and "the student defines the problem implied by his goal." To accomplish these objectives, the student reviews the goal he set at the end of the first phase. Using problem solving techniques he examines this goal in relation to the new learnings about himself. The lesson begins with a trust exercise. The coach then helps students relate the meaning and feelings of the trust exercise to the need for sincerity in helping each other solve problems, and in this instance, to set meaningful and realistic goals. The coach may say, "We trust each other to support us in their arms; we feel warm about that. Can we show our trust by trying new behaviors and can we measure the support by the warmth we feel? Talk about that. Can we speak of our hopes and goals and trust each other with these?" After discussion, the coach says, "I trust we can apply the sincerity shown in the exercise in this evaluation of personal goals." In the next part of the lesson, the student applies the problem solving system introduced in the leisure time lesson to examine facts about his behaviors and skills actually shown in the learning group. He weighs these facts against the goal he set earlier and he sets a new goal defining the problems that stand in the way. This lesson illustrates the integration of cognitive, affective and psychomotor behaviors with group support and problem solving skills.

The titles of the lessons in the second phase, Definition of a Problem, follow:

1. Identifying Assumptions
2. Portraying Oneself
3. Giving a Talk
4. Writing Tests
5. Producing Ideas About Leisure Time
6. Problem Solving in Leisure
7. Rating Behaviors in Groups
8. Learning Helpful Behaviors in Groups
9. Expressing Trust in the Group
10. Describing Feelings II
11. Debating the Topic: To Work or Not to Work

12. Identifying Strengths of the Family
13. Evaluating Membership on a Team
14. Setting Goals

Phase III. In the lessons of the third phase of the course, where the phase objective is to choose an alternative solution, the lessons relate to the problems of everyday life. The titles are classified under five areas of life responsibility, self, family, job, leisure and community responsibilities. The activities of the lessons broaden the students knowledge of community resources. Resource persons such as employers, lawyers, or the public health nurse take part in the lessons. Visits or tours to community agencies take place. The student practises applying problem solving techniques. The many alternative courses of action a person can take receive emphasis and students apply a suitable solution. Phase III, Choice of a Solution, presently under revision, includes these tentative titles:

Self

1. Looking One's Best
2. Helping the Alcoholic
3. Preventing Drug Abuse
4. Handling Sex Problems
5. Overcoming Prejudice

Family

6. Observing Children's Behavior
7. Presenting a Child's Bill Of Rights
8. Disciplining Children
9. Telling Children about Sex
10. Solving Babysitting Problems
11. Helping the Handicapped
12. Raising a Family Alone
13. Fighting Fairly
14. Using Available Help to Get Out of a Money Trap
15. Managing Money
16. Dealing with the Landlord
17. Preparing Low-cost Nutritious Meals
18. Planning for One's Survivors
19. Building Strengths in the Family

Community

20. Interacting with Police
21. Availing Oneself of Legal Services
22. Using Democratic Processes at Community Meetings
23. Making Community Organizations Work for You

Job

24. Surveying Potentially Marketable Skills
25. Exploring Job Possibilities
26. Exploring Expectations of Employers
27. Writing Application Forms and Letters of Application
28. Writing the Job and Education Resume
29. Interviewing for a Job
30. Quitting the Job

Leisure

(The students carry out the activities they planned in the second phase.)

Phase IV. In the fourth phase, the Application or Implementation stage, there are only two lessons named:

1. Giving and Receiving Help on a Personal Problem
2. Making a Decision for Work Future

The first lesson provides the student with the opportunity to plan specific ways of helping fellow group members and to be helped by the group. By this time, the students apply problem solving techniques almost independently of the coach. If the group development has kept pace with the acquiring of problem solving behaviors, students should be both willing and able to assist each other and to acquire the assistance of community resource people.

In the second lesson, the student evaluates his progress in the Life Skills Course and assesses his standing in relation to the world of work. The evaluation prepares the student to leave the group and to face the reality that though he sees changes in himself, the outside world may not have changed. The lesson helps the student predict what will happen so he can make decisions and plan for his future.

Phase V The evaluation phase has but one lesson, "Evaluating My Progress in the Life Skills Course." Here the student assesses where he is, what the course has done for him and tells how he feels the course could be improved. This last activity helps the student evaluate the processes that have occurred. It also allows him the opportunity to act responsibly as a mature adult evaluating the here-and-now situation.

The Lesson Model

Just as the total course has five phases, related to steps of problem solving, so has each individual lesson. Theoretically these five stages, stimulus, evocation, objective enquiry, application and evaluation provide a cyclic approach, and repeated practice of problem solving behaviors.

In the stimulus, the coach presents the problem using a number of different methods: in one lesson, he uses a film; in another, a case study; in another, a trust exercise. During the stimulus the coach might provoke, inform, or question; whatever his method, he aims to stimulate discussion among the students.

In the evocation, the coach encourages the students to express their opinions and feelings related to the stimulus. Using counselling techniques, the coach remains non-judgmental assisting students to verbalize their concerns. Students share their knowledge about the topic, helping one another clarify the problem situation. The coach helps the students to classify the ideas given and to define the problem. He helps them formulate fact-finding questions for investigation in the next section.

In the objective enquiry, the coach acts as a teacher or a guide. Students seek out and relate new knowledge to the problem they defined; they search for answers to their questions; they practise new skills. In lessons of the first two phases of the course, they might study themselves on video, or use check lists to examine their own behavior. In lessons of the third phase, in which they study problems related to areas of life responsibility, they might study films, books, clippings from magazines, or they might go out of the centre to seek information and answers to their questions.

To facilitate the search for new data the course provides reference materials assembled in multi-media kits. No texts exist for a life skills course, but an abundance of material can be found on most topics. Sociologists report that much information reaching the middle-class comes through ladies' magazines and daily newspapers. Government departments, insurance companies and industrial corporations publish useful pamphlets. Because many of the disadvantaged have little access to this type of material, the kits include magazine and newspaper clippings, government and business publications and paper back books. They also include pictures, films, film-strips, slides, cartoons and the names and addresses of local people who have indicated a willingness to act as resource persons. The coach encourages students to compare articles and contrast ideas they find in one source with those in another.

In the application phase of the lesson, the coach helps the student apply knowledge and skills to the solution of a problem. The activities resemble real life situations whenever possible. In Phases I and II, the here and now situation is the learning group. In Phase III, the home, the community, or the job being the focus, students interact in the community, invite outsiders in, or plan simulations of real situations. In the lesson, Identifying Strengths of the Family, for example, video equipment is moved to a home to film a family meal; the group analyze the tape listing the strengths they see. In the lesson, Using Available Help to Get Out of a Money Trap, a student presents his case to one or more finance companies or credit unions, asking for help. The group discuss the advice given and help the student plan his course of action. In the lesson, Exploring Expectations of Employers, employers come to the learning group to participate in a dialogue during the evocation phase of the lesson. In the application phase, each student seeks information at an employer's place of business. The data becomes the subject matter of later lessons, such as Exploring Job Possibilities or Interviewing For a Job.

In the evaluation phase, the students and coach assess how they did and how the lesson helped them; they evaluate their own behavior in group interaction and evaluate the processes used; they evaluate how well each student met the skill objectives set for the lesson. Both the learning group behaviors and the problem solving behaviors are studied, assessed, and modified if necessary. In most lessons, the evaluation is done through discussion, analysing videotapes or with check lists. In one lesson, students sequence picture charts showing the relationship between processes used; in another, they assess their reaction to a confrontation by the coach. In all lessons, the coach notes the individual student's need for further practise on the skill objective and plans ways to provide this.

In summary, the lesson model has five phases: in the stimulus, the coach presents the problem situation; in the evocation the student reacts to and defines the problem, sometimes formally, sometimes not; in the objective enquiry the student searches out information and practises new behaviors; in the application, he applies knowledge and skill to the solution of the problem; and in the evaluation, he assesses how well and what was done.

The Lesson Plan. The Life Skills lesson plan gives specific directions for carrying out the activities of the lesson. The prescriptive style provides the coach with details to clarify the intent; it describes one way of reaching the objectives, given the target population and the trained coach.

Each printed lesson plan contains nine parts: an Overview which relates the lesson to the theoretical process and purposes of the course, a statement of the Resources Required listing the materials and equipment needed by the coach to carry out the lesson, the Skill Objectives including the generic objectives related to the problem solving process and the specific objectives which specify the behaviors the student practises in the lesson, and descriptions of the Stimulus, Evocation, Objective Enquiry, Application and Evaluation.

A Sample Life Skills Lesson. Sally, in the story at the first of this chapter, was arrested for underage drinking. She knew that if she were caught she would have to pay a fine or serve a jail sentence; however, annoyed at the time of arrest, she complicated the situation by hitting the policeman. Many situations involving contact with police, provoke feelings. Anyone, say, stopped for speeding, likely feels angry; the feelings are there, but venting the anger by cursing or hitting the policeman only complicates the situation.

Some Life Skills students have never met a policeman except in a confrontation. The lesson, Interacting with Police, provides an opportunity for the student to talk to policemen in a situation where the student does not feel threatened because of fear of arrest or of getting someone else he knows into trouble.

The overview to the lesson reads,

> "When people meet police in the line of duty, their spontaneous reactions sometimes cause them needless trouble. In this lesson, the students study their reactions to situations related to the police. They practise new behaviors, thus applying the problem solving principle of exploring alternative solutions."

The lesson emphasizes behavior. The generic objectives read,

> "The student examines assumptions about his behavior," and, "The student practises behaviors as alternative solutions to a life problem."

The specific objectives outline how the student achieves the generic objectives:

> "The student compares his opinions of police to the opinions of others; he role plays situations related to arrest or confrontation by the police; he interacts with police in an activity

planned by the students' he compares results on a pre and post questionnaire."

In the stimulus, the coach outlines the problem and the plan for the lesson. To find the feelings other people have toward the police, the students conduct on-the-street interviews. In the evaluation, they complete the form, Confidential Observations on Police, at the start of the lesson and again at the end.

In the evocation stage, the students share the information from the interviews; they tell anecdotes and discuss how opinions are formed. The coach encourages students to discuss their own problems and to share information on the topic. The coach helps students summarize their discussion by classifying the data gathered and raising questions about what they need to know. They define the problem they wish to pursue in the rest of the lesson and list questions they wish answered.

In the objective enquiry phase, students examine sources of information which can answer questions raised. In this lesson, they view the film, The Candid Eye: Police, discussing it from a number of viewpoints. They role-play an arrest situation, playing both the policeman and the accused; they discuss their feelings about the roles they played, and they examine their behavior by viewing themselves on videotape. They may role-play the situations again, emphasizing effective behavior. Finally, they review the materials in the multi-media kit. This kit contains a book on the history of the R.C.M.P., newspaper clippings on alleged police brutality in Saskatoon, clippings on what happened in Montreal during the famous police strike. The kit has a CBC tape on the police, and the film for use in the lesson. There are pamphlets on job opportunities as a policeman as well as a policeman's aide. The materials reflect a wide variety of viewpoints that can stimulate discussions among the students and which might answer questions students might raise.

The students plan much of the application phase of the lesson themselves. To assist them, the lesson reads,

> "Up to this point we have talked to other people, viewed films, read articles and role-played situations about police, but we haven't talked to police!" The coach proposes a number of applications for the lesson, encouraging the students to offer other suggestions: inviting five or six policemen to the training centre for a vignette; touring the police station; arranging for two observers to spend an evening at the police station. The students may compose a vignette of a policeman and other people in the legal system such as, a lawyer, a judge, a sheriff, a probation officer, a jail guard, or a member of the John Howard Society; if he uses this composition, he directs the groups to discuss the role of the police in relationship to other law enforcement people.
>
> To choose the most effective solution, the group develop a set of selection criteria. They rate each solution against each of the criteria and choose the most effective one.
>
> The coach asks each member of the group to predict his learnings from the chosen solution. He records these predictions for use in the evaluation."

In the application stage, the students plan and carry out the application they chose with the help of the coach. A true application of this lesson would be to get arrested without complicating the situation through impulsive behavior; this, of course, is neither practical not desirable. Therefore, the lesson involves some plan to meet with the police so that students can test their reactions to the policeman himself. The lesson gives the student some control over the interaction, allowing him to act in a responsible manner.

In the evaluation phase, the students again complete the form, Confidential Observations on Police, and compare these ratings with those made earlier. As this is a confidential form, the coach requests no information unless the students volunteer to comment. The coach does complete an evaluation form on group member behaviors as he observed them. He uses this to initiate a discussion about behaviors (but not opinions) of group members in interaction with the police and how the students helped each other during the various activities.

Involving students with authority figures in a low-threat situation is important to the life skills idea. Follow-up data on Larry tells us that at the construction site where he worked this summer, some bales of wire were missing. The R.C.M.P. questioned Larry about this. He reports he was awed by the uniform but that he remembered talking to a policeman in the Life Skills Course and remembered there was a man behind the uniform who could make mistakes unintentionally the same as he might. He sat down with the officer and gave him the information he wanted. He then asked, "Why did you only talk to those two boys and me about this?" Larry is Indian and so were the other two boys. He felt he was being discriminated against, but now was able to talk to the policeman about the problem. Instead of withholding information or allowing his anger to control his behavior, he cooperated with the officer and then asked him to deal with the problem from his point of view.

Summary

In developing lessons for the Life Skills Course, the course developers apply the theoretical concepts contained in the earlier section of this book, The Life Skills: A Course in Applied Problem Solving. Objectives relate to problems of the here-and-now situation of the learning group and to problems arising in the lives of the students. Using the lesson plan model, course developers plan activities and experiences which relate to these objectives. Using the lessons as prescriptive guides, the coach leads the student through recognition and definition of the problem, the consideration and choice of alternative solutions, and guides him through the application and evaluation phases of the lessons and the course.

If the course achieves its purpose, the student continues to apply problem solving behaviors appropriately and responsibly in the management of his personal affairs. As with any course, the individual differences of students must be met. Each graduate will apply skills learned in different ways and to different problems. Pete, who was 19 and sorry he quit school, didn't make his grade ten. He had great difficulty with reading and a grade ten is likely an unrealistic goal for him. During the Life Skills Course, Pete was helped by his fellow students to figure out some problems he had and to role play alternative forms of behavior. One day he told the group of arguments over the family car. The group helped him realize his temper was part of the problem. In a follow-up interview, Pete told the interviewer about a job he had planting trees in a reforestation project. The forman yelled to him that he wasn't doing the job right. Instead of getting mad and walking off the job as he claims he would have done and had done before coming to the Life Skills Course, he asked the boss to show him what he was doing wrong and how to do it correctly. Pete applied a simple, but often difficult problem solving skill, that of asking for help. If the application of this and similar skills helps Pete keep his job and solve his other life problems, then the intervention of the course in his life may serve Pete well.

TRAINING THE LIFE SKILLS COACH

- Ronald Friedman

Trends for Change in Teacher Education

Much educational research and study of the past decade has explored the problems of the disadvantaged, the trends and changes in teacher education to meet this challenge, and the possible courses of remedial action; this trend has influenced our approach to the training of coaches.

One of the most pervasive trends in education of the disadvantaged, has dealt with exploring the ways in which changes can be brought about in the behaviors and attitudes of the disadvantaged and those who teach them.

William Kvaraceus in Negro Self Concept states, "One rather significant finding, however, which we can be somewhat sure about, is the fact the education has [had] relatively little impact on attitudes and behavior." He points out that changes to take place but, "in almost any instance, however, the change is to produce more of the same; . . . . the school serves to reinforce what is already present." Studies by Coleman, Jacob's study of college education, and the research reported by Sanford tend to support the view that education has served to more deeply entrench prevailing attitudes (see also Rosenthal and Jacobson; Kozol; Kohl; Hickerson).

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If this is true, the standard approach to classroom instruction cannot achieve desired change in attitude because the standard approach tends to reinforce the student's self-concept. Kvaraceus therefore concludes that ". . . deliberate effort to change the self concept of students will appreciably affect their total education as well as their personal experience." To do this requires that most teachers also must change.

Bloom, Davis, and Hess suggest that a major change in the teacher's self-concept means a shift from his conception of himself as the operative agent in a status-giving and selective system to that of the operative agent in a system which develops each individual to his highest potential. (See Bowers also). These authors suggest that in order to accomplish this change, teacher education programs will have to shift their emphasis. One such shift would place increased stress on the higher mental processes of problem solving rather than on the processes of information learning (e.g. Crutchfield). Another places the emphasis on basic ideas, structure, and methods of inquiry rather than on amassing details of subject matter (e.g. Bruner). A third emphasis is placed on learning how to learn. (e.g. Ranbusch, Schein and Bennis). Additionally, teachers learn how to develop students' interests, attitudes, and personality which will lead to their finding satisfaction in the things they do, bringing meaning and fulfillment to their lives. (e.g. Coombs, Rubin).

Most educators agree that existing programs of teacher education do not meet the demands of today's changing conditions. Don Davies of the U.S. Office of Education summarizes these changing conditions as follows: moving from a mass approach to an individual approach in education (e.g. Gruber & Weitman; Bushnell; Moore, Moore & Anderson; Thomas & Crescimber); moving from an emphasis on memorizing to an emphasis on learning how to think, how to learn, as well as an emphasis on the non-cognitive, non-intellectual components of life (e.g. Rubin; Leonard); moving from a concept of a school isolated from the community to a concept of a school that is in and of the community (e.g. Leonard; Goodman, 1960, 1964); moving from a fear of technology to utilizing machinery and technology for educational purposes (e.g. Gross & Murphy; deGrazia & Sohn, 1962 a); moving from a negative to a positive attitude toward learners who are different (e.g. Rogers, 1969; Hickerson; Kozol; Ashton-Warner; Montessori; Standing); moving from a provincial perspective of the world and education to a multi-cultural perspective (e.g. Jones, 1968); moving from a system characterized by academic snobbery to one which recognizes and nurtures a wide variety of talents and fields (e.g. Friedenberg); moving from a system based on serving time to one which emphasizes performance (Skinner 1948, 1968).

Desirable Behaviors of Teachers

Because of these changing conditions, considerable effort has been made to describe those behaviors required for satisfactory teacher performance.

A search of the available literature indicates some of the difficulties in specifying these teacher behaviors, and offers little in the way of clear conclusions. What appears to have developed however, is a trend to categorize desired teacher behaviors according to the learners' needs. These needs are present in the case of all learners but are especially critical in the case of the culturally disadvantaged.

In 1964, Berelson and Steiner in their Human Behavior: An Inventory of Scientific Findings summarized the state of the art by writing "Even though there is a vast body of research on the relation of teacher characteristics to effectiveness in teaching, the reviews of this research . . . show no consistent relation between any characteristics, including intelligence, and such teaching effectiveness." Fortunately however, there is good reason to be more optimistic today.

Since the Berelson-Steiner statement, greater emphasis has been placed on the amount and quality of research, on studies of the performance of successful teachers and on developing and applying the concepts of performance criteria which incorporate the development of behavioral objectives. These seem to offer a meaningful approach to helping people learn in the future.

Nathan Gage in Teachers for the Disadvantaged offers five dimensions of "desirable" teacher behaviors based on findings published by Flanders, Ryans, Cogan, Ausubel, Coffman, Gibb, Gagne, and others.

These characteristics of behavior selected on the basis of their relationship with desirable outcomes or aspects of teaching are: warmth, cognitive organization, orderliness, indirectness, and ability to solve instructional problems.

1. Warmth . . . "The tendency of the teacher to be approving provide emotional support, express a sympathetic attitude and accept the feelings of pupils." Clark Moustakas, in his The Authentic Teacher, expands on the "not perfect, but real, genuine, human" qualities of the "authentic helper" and allows that the authentic teacher permits "opportunities for honest expression of feelings and expansion of the self through meaningful, self-chosen interests and activities" whether in conflict or harmony. Carl Rogers uses the term 'congruence' to describe much the same condition.

2. Cognitive Organization. "Insofar as a teacher aims to have his pupils acquire understanding, or meaningful learning, rather than mere rote knowledge, he should possess and exhibit the kind of intellectual graps of his subject matter" is what Gage here terms "cognitive organization." Flanders has commented that "there is no substitute for knowledge of what is being taught". According to Ausubel, "the art and science of presenting ideas and information meaningfully and

effectively . . . is really the principal function of pedagogy." Gagne, Katona, Brownell and Moser have expressed similar convictions that the teacher's behavior should reflect a "clear and valid cognitive organization of what he is trying to teach."

3. Orderliness . . . refers to the "teacher's tendency to be systematic and methodical in his self-management." In part it consists of teacher effectiveness in classroom management Some of the work done by Ryans, Cogan, Coffman, and Gibb, derived in large part from factor analyses of observers' and students' ratings, investigated the dimension of "responsible, systematic, businesslike - vs - evading, unplanned, slipshod teacher behavior." Some of the findings suggest that school principals' "conceptualization of the poor . . . teacher is heavily influenced by unplanned, slipshod, irresponsible classroom behavior."

4. Indirectness. A tendency toward indirect methods of teaching consists in giving students "opportunities to engage in overt behaviors, such as talking and problem solving, relevant to the learning objectives rather than merely listening to their teacher, and to discover ideas and solutions to problems rather than merely receiving them from the teacher." Indirectness in teaching represents a willingness to forebear

furnishing the pupil with everything he needs to know. It does not however, mean abandoning the pupil to his own devices. In Ryans' terms such a teacher would be high on "stimulating, imaginative, and original - vs - dull and routine" teacher behavior and is "associated with the teacher's ability to encourage pupil participation and initiative." Flanders sums up his findings by stating, "our theory suggests an indirect approach; most teachers use a direct approach."

5. Ability to Solve Instructional Problems . . . refers to the teacher's ability to solve problems "unique to his work in a particular subdivision" of his calling. That is, teachers should be more proficient at solving problems in their specialty areas of subject matter, than teachers who are required to teach other subjects, or persons of equal academic qualification who do not teach at all. Turner reported that "teachers who were rated by supervisors significantly higher mean problem-solving scores than did teachers rated distinctly below average. Pupils taught by high-scoring, problem-solving teachers achieved significantly more than pupils taught by low-scoring teachers." Gage concludes his discussion of the desirable behaviors by stating that "Apart from the social-emotional aspects of teaching behavior; the more strictly

cognitive-intellectual ones, and the managerial phases of their work, good teachers need a unique body of problem-solving skills."

Given that these categories of behaviors would serve to present a set of terminal goals for coach behavior, the challenge now is in determining the approach to take to train the Life Skills Coach to become a truly "authentic helper".

Functions of the Coach

In the Life Skills course, a primary force to change behaviors in the behavior-oriented helping group. It is the role of the coach to facilitate meaningful learning experiences and help the students to apply their knowledge and test new behaviors in solving problems in a wide range of life situations. How the coach functions depends not only upon the guidance he receives from the Life Skills lesson and his supervisor, but also upon his style, the nature of the group, his perceptions, his sensitivity and his competence in meeting the demands of new situations. Nevertheless, it is possible to classify the functions. Tannenbaum, Weschler and Massarik in discussing the role of a human relations trainer describe five main categories of behavior which are germane to the functions of a Life Skills coach.

1. Creating Situations Conducive to Learning. The coach helps structure some of the situations in which the students interact

If the coach presents his lessons skillfully, the relations between students to provide numerous focal points for useful learning. For example, the cautious use of brief sociometric questions (indications of liking, desirability as work partner, recognition of potentially useful life skills, etc.) involving the members of the group in a given lesson typically yields data on the way each group member perceives his fellows. As each student experiences the various problem solving and human interaction situations, the coach helps to diagnose and comment on them. Each student gains potentially useful insights, which in turn can be strengthened by peer evaluation and group discussion.

2. Establishing a Model of Behavior. The coach provides a model for behavior by his activity in the group, his approach to problem solving, his acceptance of criticism, his non-judgemental comments, his willingness to evaluate his own behavior, and his ability to raise questions and to express his own feelings. By his behavior, he helps establish acceptance and freedom of expression in which the group can discuss interpersonal problems that otherwise might be avoided.

3. Introducing New Values. The coach, by his behavior, implicitly or explicitly introduces new values into the group. The way

he reflects feelings, clarifies comments, and actively behaves focuses attention on those problems which he feels the group should eventually handle. For example, his willingness to relinquish a position of authority and leadership carries with it a host of implications for the group.

4. Facilitating the Flow of Communication. The coach helps to identify barriers to communication between individuals. By raising questions, clarifying issues, and encouraging participation of all members of the group he facilitates the development of mutual understanding and agreement. Frequently when sources of difficulty are below the level of awareness, the coach, who is less personally involved with these difficulties than the group, is better able to identify the problems and help bring about their recognition and potential solution.

5. Participating as an "Expert." The coach, as an "expert", is often required to help the students learn problem solving approaches and skills, basic communication skills, and other behavioral skills helpful in facilitating the group process. At times the coach introduces knowledge derived from his experience or from other sources, which the group may want in order to proceed with the solution of a given problem.

> However, many groups, particularly at their initial stages, push responsibility for their progress onto the coaches. There are attendant costs to the students in doing this. By putting the coaches in a position of answering questions, of making decisions for the group, of establishing goals and setting group values, the students involvement in the training process is reduced. Therefore, the coaches try to keep maximum responsibility for determinations affecting the group itself with the students.

There is one additional function of the coach which might often be overlooked - that of the "group member" function (Lippitt and This). The fact that the helping group is a cultural unit implies that it has all the potential aspects of group identification, cohesion and growth. The group builds expectations for all persons in the training situation, and this includes the coach.

The coach, of course, does not perform the typical membership function. From the outset he is a competent practitioner of group problem solving skills. As the group begins to "take over" and begins to see the different contributions of the members, the group identifies a point in its growth when it overtly indicates that the coach "is now a member of the helping group." At the covert level, the coach might have been a member of the group long before the group identified this as being so. The coach may be a unique member, but as the helping group matures so does each member become unique in a number of different ways.

Determining Training Objectives

Within the broad functions listed above a thorough description was made of what successful coaches do. These behaviors were analyzed to determine the nature of the knowledge and skills required by the coaches-in-training to perform competently.

This approach of beginning with an analysis of teaching behavior is not typical practice in most teacher-preparing institutions as Martin Haberman points out: "The program of teacher education cannot include a course in educational psychology and assume that such study will influence the students' future behavior as teachers." The emphasis must be on identifying the successful behavior patterns. From this can follow the opportunities for student teachers or coaches to behave in those specific ways that indicate they "understand the nature of learning at the same time they support their actions with theories and principles of learning."

The following intermediate goals with respect to development of a Life Skills Coach Training course were initially identified: " . . . define the term coach; describe the behaviors of the coach which lead to changed behaviors on the part of the students; develop means by which prospective coaches can learn these behaviors; identify those behaviors which coaches require, but for which there would be no training, and so in effect, define the selection criteria for coaches; . . ." (Saskatchewan NewStart, Plan of Operation, 1970-71 First Draft.)

In addition to the desirable behaviors described in current literature and in the analysis of the functions of the coach, behaviors that contributed to the successful coaching were identified. This was accomplished by observing and analyzing the performance of coaches engaged in the Life Skills Training program. Frequent meetings with the coaches and the supervisors were held in which they discussed their training problems, the reaction of the students, and their perceptions of specific growth needs which should be translated into training.

Each Life Skills lesson was scrutinized and the major presentation skills required by the coach to conduct the lesson were recorded on a checklist. Table 1 shows a specimen of the checklist of skills required by the coach, and the relationship of skills to lessons and lesson phases.

TABLE 1

SPECIMEN CHECKLIST

MAJOR PRESENTATION SKILLS REQUIRED TO CONDUCT LIFE SKILLS LESSONS

LIFE SKILLS LESSON	Questioning Techniques	Discussion Leading	Case Method	Role Playing	Recording, Categorizing, Summarizing	Lecturing (Informing)	Conducting Human Relation Exercises	Showing a Film	Operating VTR Equipment	Using Flip Chart	Using Blackboard	Polaroid Camera	Cassette Recorder	Overhead Projector	Film Strip Projector	Special Technique (See Lesson)	SUITABILITY AS A PRACTICE LESSON S = Stimulus E = Evocation O = Objective Enquiry A = Application EV = Evaluation				
Managing Money	x	x			x	x				x				x			S	E	O	-	-
Dealing with the Landlord	x	x	x		x					x			x				S	E	-	A	-
Telling Children about Sex	x	x		x	x					x			x				S	E	O	A	-
Getting Out of a Money Trap	x	x	x	x	x					x					x		S	E	O	A	EV
Fighting Fairly	x	x			x					x							S	E	O	-	-
Prepairing Low-cost Nutritious Meals	x	x			x												-	-	-	-	-
Raising a Family Alone	x	x			x		x	x		x							S	E	O	-	-
Surveying Potentially Marketable Skills	x	x	x		x					x							S	E	O	A	-
Writing Letters of Application	x	x			x					x						x	S	E	O	A	EV
Writing the Job and Education Resume	x	x			x	x				x				x			S	E	O	A	EV
Writing Application Forms	x	x			x					x				x			S	E	O	A	EV
Debating the Topic: To Work or Not to Work	x	x	x										x				S	E	O	A	EV
Exploring Expectations of Employers	x	x			x				x	x							-	-	-	-	-
Quitting the Job	x	x	x		x				x	x				x			S	E	O	A	EV

Criteria Affecting Design of the Coach Training Program

Because of the uniqueness of the Life Skills program and the lack of historical data available upon which to base the Coach Training program, some of the discussion which follows will be necessarily fragmented. It will offer however some suggestions and insights into the problems of training prospective coaches based on the experiences gained at Saskatchewan NewStart and elsewhere.

The nature of the Life Skills program is such that it demands the coaching services of persons of high quality. Nathan Gage specifies the characteristics of warmth, cognitive organization, orderliness, indirectness, and ability to solve instructional problems. Allen and Cooper are interested in producing a person who "meets the human criteria of warmth and human understanding, but is also capable of rigorous thinking, is in control of his own behavior, and is in a constant pattern of growth." Other educators specify equally high objectives for teacher training.

In order to help the students learn the required life skills, the coach must possess whatever desirable behaviors are required to make it so. Sociology, psychology, education and behavioral technology have advanced to the stage whereby selected persons can learn the knowledge and skills, and develop the attitudes necessary to perform successfully as coaches.

The following principles, without exhausting the subject, indicate some concepts on which the emphasis of coach training is based. In many cases these principles have grown out of recommendations made by Project Aware Teams in the U.S.A. and described in Teacher Education in a Social Context.

Training should be based on the expectation that the coach will view the learning process in the complete social context of life; the goals of coach training are best expressed as often as possible in clear, realistic, behavioral terms; the coach should learn to see himself as an agent for change, and learn to respond to the needs and interests of students; training should provide considerable elasticity so that the individual needs, differences and backgrounds of coaches-in-training can be taken into account; training should stress the need for communication between coaches and students, as well as between coaches and coaches, supervisors and other staff; experimentation and innovation should pervade the coach training program; the instructional process should emphasize on experiential learnings; Coaches should be trained with a small group of peers (say 10 or 12) to ensure maximum involvement of every participant and opportunity to practise the skills; training should be conducted in an environment approximating that in which the coach will be working; prospective coaches should be selected with utmost care in reference to their personal qualities and their academic and experiential qualifications; during the entire process of training, the coach should be evaluated in terms of the demonstrable behaviors expected of successful coaches, and the program should be evaluated as to its effectiveness.

Many educators have developed or suggested models for teacher training based on analyses of knowledge, skills and attitudes required. Dwight Allen and James Cooper have a model specifying performance criteria in three broad conceptual areas related to teaching. They name these "Content Knowledge, Behavioral Skills, Human Relations Skills." Task Force Two of the School-University Teacher-Education Project illustrated curricular content and experiences for teachers under the rubric of these interrelated processes, "Knowing (Foundational Knowledge), Doing (Applied Knowledge and Skills), and Being (Knowledge of Self)". Miriam Goldberg has developed a model of the hypothetical teacher suggesting three attributes; "Mastery of subject matter; Repertoire of teaching strategies . . ., and Understanding of the major concepts of the behavioral and social sciences and their relevance . . .". These models based on the processes of "Knowing, Doing and Being" seem appropriate to our approach to coach training.

The coach training program must be multi-activity in nature and include at least as many instructional strategies as those needed by coaches in-service. Emphasis should be placed on practicums and experience so that the coaches can discover the consequences and effectiveness of varying strategies. Basing their decisions on these experiences, those conducting the program can determine the relative acceptance and appreciation of the processes by the coaches-in-training, and use this feedback to remedy the individuals' or program weaknesses.

Recruiting Candidates for Coach Training

In the disadvantaged sub-sulture the role and status of each individual is established more by the group members than by external authority. Any attempt to assign a role or status from outside is normally resisted by the group; consequently, the teacher must operate within the limits of the group. This is exceedingly difficult for individuals long conditioned to the security of a role derived from the patterns or the institutions of the dominant middle-class culture.

The problems of learning experienced by the disadvantaged population involve both their communication systems and their value systems. Coolie Verner (1970) notes that this group has its own shared values, feelings, patterns of thinking and behaviors which differ from those of the dominant culture in significant ways. Communicating with adults from this sub-cultural group demands a real 'feel' for their values and the dynamics of their social system.

Most of the coaches are recruited from among mature adults who are of, or who identify closely with, the disadvantaged. It has been found that members of the disadvantaged population are apt to communicate more freely with and be more receptive to help from persons of similar socio-economic backgrounds. The Life Skills training team has three or four coaches supervised and assisted by a professional staff member. This approach appears to be a promising one. Indeed, involvement of the total team is considered essential to success of the Life Skills program.

The candidates are recruited through the co-operation of a number of referral agencies according to some very general criteria for the type of person desired. Some of the major criteria are: willingness to write a number of pencil and paper tests, the results of which would determine in part their entry to the training program; willingness to a two-day intensive pre-course experience after which a decision would be made on their admittance to the training program; minimum age of 23 years and maximum age of about 55 years; Some characteristics demonstrating above average intelligence, e.g.; formal education or some kind of equivalent, self-education, curiosity, fluency in language, broad interests, interests in job advancement, writing ability; Interest in working with people as indicated by the type of job the person had or an expression of interest in the type of work which requires this; Need to have male and female candidates, of Indian, Metis and white backgrounds, and of socio-economic backgrounds similar to that of the Life Skills students.

Selection of Candidates for Coach Training

The selection criteria and methods of screening the candidates are integrated with the course content, methods and techniques so that the training program is tailor-made as much as possible to carefully selected candidates.

The candidates are tested. The variables that are measured, the tests that are used, and the criteria for selection are indicated in Table 2.

TABLE 2

SELECTION CRITERIA FOR CANDIDATES OF THE "PRE-COURSE EXPERIENCE"

Variable Measured	Instrument/Scale	Score and Direction Criterion
Reading Comprehension	General Reading for Understanding (RFU)	Grade 11 or better
Preference for Working Situations	Kuder Personal Preference Record (KP)	(High=70+,Low=40,A 70)
	Preference for: Group situations	high
	Stable (familiar) situations	low
	Dealing with ideas	average or high
	Avoidance of conflict	average or low
	Directing others	average or low (if see style of leader on GHI)

Variable Measured	Instrument/Scale	Score and Direction Criterion
Personality	16 Personality Factor Questionnaire(16PF)	(High=7-10, Low=1-4 Average=5 and 6)
	Warmth	high
	Maturity	high
	Dominance	average
	Enthusiasm	high
	Conscientiousness	average or high
	Adventurous	average or high
	Sensitivity	high
	Suspicion	low
	Eccentricity	average
	Sophistication	average
	Insecurity	low
	Experimenting	average or high
	Self-sufficience	average
	Controlled	average
	Tenseness	average or low
Intelligence - Ability to Solve Novel Problems	Raven Progressive Matrices	70 percentile or better
Vocational Aptitudes	General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB)	General - 110+ Verbal - 110+ Numerical - Average or better
Rigidity and Dogmatism	Scale of Self-Assertiveness and Rigor (SSAR)	Average or low
Spontaneous Flexibility	Alternate Uses (AU)	Average or high
Leadership Behavior	Guilford Holley L Inventory (GHI)	no extreme deviations

Variable Measured	Instrument/Scale	Score and Direction Criterion
Leadership Ability	Leadership Ability Evaluation (LAE)	score of 10 or less: Look for ability to influence in a democratic manner
Vocational Interests	Geist Picture Inventory	Looking for high Social Service, average or less on Persuasiveness, average or higher on Literary.

The test scores are examined for a pre-determined "pattern analysis" and the persons who "pass" participate in a "pre-course experience."

The two-day pre-course experience as part of the screening process, has four purposes: to provide the course instructors and other interested personnel with first hand information about each person from close interaction with and observation of each of the potential coaches; to give the potential coaches an opportunity to know the instructors and their peers better; to give the candidates an opportunity to hear of and encounter as much of the possibly troubling aspects of coaching the Life Skills course; to give the potential coaches a taste of some types of activity which are unusual and possibly disturbing to students in the Life Skills Course.

The process is designed to ensure that the participants understand that it's a tough job to be a Life Skills coach and not for the timid. The experience purposely creates an atmosphere which is at times ambiguous and anxiety producing. The desired effect is to have the potential coaches identify and consciously share some of the anxiety induced in the behavior oriented helping group.

A Supervisor of Life Skills training "tells it like it really is" in coaching - frustrating, depressing, exciting and rewarding. He emphasizes how emotionally involving coaching can be and how the coach can have the problems of his group thrust upon him, and at times how the group can reject the coach. He gives examples of some of the contradictory demands upon the coach to be both sensitive and tough, subjective and objective, involved and detached.

The candidates view and discuss videotapes of intensive group interactions sometimes duplicated in the Life Skills program. They take part in structured verbal and non-verbal experiences used in human relations training, and examine interpersonal and group problems which emerge. They also have the opportunity to gain deeper understanding of their own reactions toward authority figures, colleagues, needs for control, intimacy and belonging.

The intention is not to recruit people for the course who finish only to find that they can not take being a Life Skills Coach. There is no "selling job"; if anything, there is an over-emphasis on the problems of Life Skills coaching.

At the end of the two-day experience the candidates are asked whether they still wish to be considered for coach training. The candidates then rank themselves and each other on "probable success as a Life Skills Coach." These rankings, the observations made by the instructors, and the tests results are used to select the candidates for training.

General Design of Training Program

The training program aims to prepare the Life Skills coach as a leader of a Life Skills group, a trainer in the application of problem solving and social skills, and a resource person to his group. To accomplish this, the design is based on the criteria described on pages 67 to 69 taking into account the specific training needs required by each coach to perform the functions that are described on pages 70 to 73.

Since one of the main components of the Life Skills course is the behavior-oriented group process, the training of coaches centres on a behavioristic model with an accent on skills training - mainly in the group mode. There is limited use of lecturing and greater use of peer group interaction, independent study and skill practices small seminar group sessions and practicums based upon the Life Skills lessons.

The coach training program has three phases, Pre-Service Training, the Contact Laboratory, and In-Service Training. In the Pre-Service Training phase, the coaches develop competencies individually and with their peers before they work with students. In the Contact Laboratory phase, coaches-in-training work with students in an on-going Life Skills program under close supervision. During this period the coach serves a dual role: he is an assistant coach part of the time, and a student coach part of the time. During the In-Service Training phase, the coaches assume responsibility for student learning in real life conditions, and under supervision where evaluation and training continues.

These are not so much separate stages of training as different phases of concentration on a continuum. For instance, some of the Life Skills lessons used by the coach in the Contact Laboratory, are used by the coach-in-training to practise various instructional processes during his pre-service tenure. The coach on the job, having accumulated experiences in the classroom, might then deepen his insight into the educational process by examining his experiences in the light of new learning in the format continuing education. This would probably be in areas of psychology of learning, group dynamics, problems of emotional adjustment, diagnosis of learning difficulties and other areas of particular interest or strength.

This paper addresses the first two phases of training only. The training takes approximately four months. The plan simulates the range of learning experiences students encounter in the problem solving group. To do this, a combination of a "programmed approach" to teaching behavioral skills, the "laboratory approach" and a "problem solving approach" is used. The training procedures used, involve teaching pairs of students the skills of direct mutual communication. The coaches first use specific behavioral skills which are videotaped. They then read selected texts and complete a paper exercise dealing with the specific dimensions of the behavior. Following this a supervisor leads a discussion and shows videotape of a "live" demonstration of the skills under study. The coaches view their videotaped interaction and diagnose it. They then engage in another interaction to demonstrate the skills they had learned. Feedback and supervision sessions are held in which subsequent videotapes are reviewed and behaviors practised until the coaches can perform the skills competently. The coach also interact in small groups to learn those skills which require more than two people.

The behavioral skills learned by the coach are similar to those used in encounter groups. The "laboratory approach" presents the coaches with an opportunity to transfer their learnings and skills to a variety of contexts. Schein and Bennis see the "laboratory approach as . . . an educational strategy which is based primarily on the experiences generated in various social encounters by _the learners themselves_, and which aims to influence attitudes and develop competencies toward learning about human interactions. Laboratory training aims at behavioral change by providing the coaches with experiential learnings involving "knowing, doing and being." The laboratory makes available information and theory about individuals and groups, but the basic content is found in the "here and now" behavior of the participants.

The laboratory approach can induce anxiety which has the effect of unsettling and frustrating those subjected to it. This anxiety is a valuable part of the training because it triggers emotions in the coaches often experienced by the students. The method also induces more consideration for the students and others, less dependence on others, less demand to satisfy control needs, increased perception, better communication through more adequate and objective listening, and self-confidence in interaction.

The essential task in coach laboratory training is to build a group whose members can set goals, define problems, develop trust, communicate, develop leadership, manage conflict and perform in responsible and creative membership roles. Working on this task, while encountering one another's behavior and seeing one's behavior as it looks to others makes the experience a powerful means to more effective ways of working together as a coaching team and as Life Skills group "members." A variety of activities clarify this experience and help the coaches apply it to their on-the-job efforts where the same skills and sensitivities are needed. A major focus is on the "facilitation of learning" (Rogers) - that is, the process of self-starting, self-initiating learning and also the process of helping to facilitate significant learning for others.

The major criticism levelled against laboratory training is that in many cases it is not "really" training. Odiorne presents a convincing case in support of these charges and rests his criticisms on five criteria of sound training: in good training the desired terminal behavior can be identified before the training begins; the course of change is comprised of some logical small steps in good training; the learning and learner are under control in good training; there are selection standards for admission in good training; results are evaluated in good training.

We have been particularly vigilant about training as it involves these criteria. Special emphasis has been placed on defining specific human relations skills and the methods of training (Higgins, Ivey and Uhleman; Egan), the selection of coach candidates (see page 82, and the evaluation of results (see page 98).

The Life Skills student who cannot "cope" with an awkward problem situation, or the coach who doesn't know what to do next with his group may both suffer from a lack of problem solving skills. The coach might well use specific behavioral skills and apply them to good effect in the laboratory but still be unable to solve instructional or life skills problems. It is through the learning and application of a whole array of problem solving behaviors that the coach integrates those behaviors referred to earlier in this section. The coach transfers and filters these new behaviors from the security and "unrealness" of the laboratory to 'real' world situations. It is at this time that the coach is able to demonstrate competence in combining his behavioral skills with a range of problem solving methods to human relational, instructional and life problems.

The overall strategy of organizing and deciding on the subject content can be comprehended by examination of Figure 1. The model is based on the five dimensions of "desirable teacher behaviors" propounded by Nathan Gage and outlined in this paper on pages 67 to 70. These are Warmth, Cognitive Organization, Orderliness, Indirectness, Ability to Solve Instructional Problems. The Coach Training program redefines these into five broad areas of competencies; Human Relation Skills; Knowledge; Lesson planning and Preparation Skills; Lesson Presentation Skills; Problem Solving Skills. To these, is added a sixth area of competencies - that of Evaluation Skills.

Content of the Life Skills Coach Training Program

An outline of the topics and subject content is shown below. They are listed under the six rubrics shown in Figure 1 as "Areas of Competencies."

Some skills permeate throughout, or could be classified under more than one heading. For example, the family of "Communication Skills" shown under the heading "Problem Solving Skills", could have been categorized as "Human Relation Skills" or "Lesson Presentation Skills" because they relate to all of these areas of competency. What is important is that the course content includes these skills and that the coaches-in-training develop the terminal behaviors to the required level of competency.

1. Human Relation Skills. The development of these skills is central to coach training. The coach develops a sensitivity and awareness in his training which he transfers to the Life Skills classroom. Behaviors are practised and modified until the coach develops competency in such things as:

   a. expressing and sharing feelings, giving and receiving constructive feedback, initiating and contributing data seeking contributions from others, summarizing, clarifying, coordinating, integrating, elaborating, setting standards and orientating, testing for consensus, gatekeeping, encouraging and supporting, harmonizing and compromising;

   b. coping with such harmful behaviors as blocking, dominating, recognition seeking and competing, self-

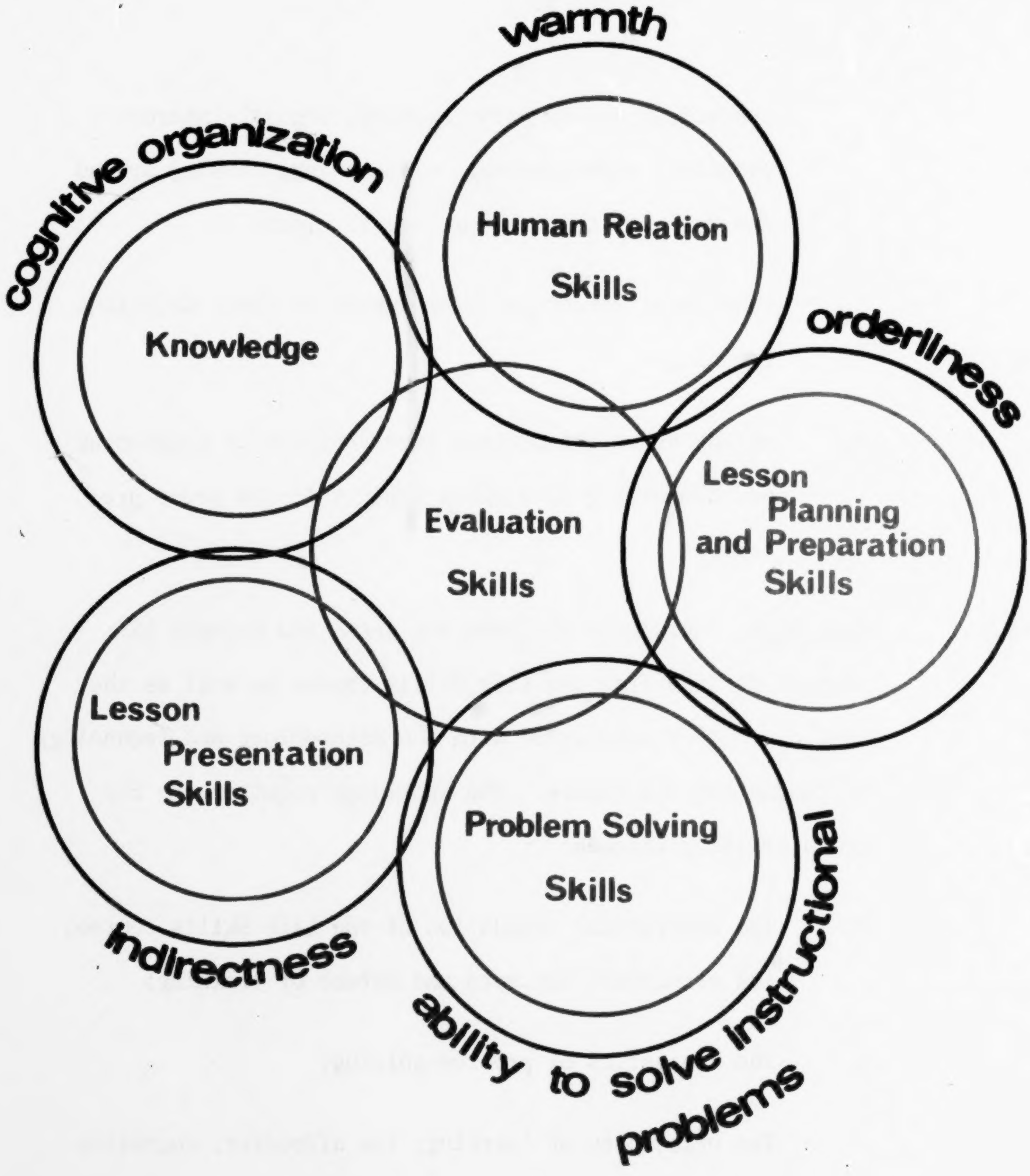
warmth
cognitive organization
Human Relation Skills
Knowledge
orderliness
Evaluation Skills
Lesson Planning and Preparation Skills
Lesson Presentation Skills
Problem Solving Skills
indirectness
ability to solve instructional problems

FIGURE I

SHOWING "DESIRABLE TEACHER BEHAVIORS" BY NATHAN GAGE

AND

LIFE SKILLS COACH "AREAS OF COMPETENCIES" confessing and sympathy seeking, special-interest pleading, side-tracking, withdrawing, horsing around and assuming that the problem is clear;

c. conducting structured experiences in Human Relations training;

d. making effective process interventions in diagnosing and commenting on various aspects of the group process.

2. Knowledge. Knowledge includes the depth and breadth of content derived from the Life Skills course as well as the kind of content associated with the methodology and technology of conducting the course. The knowledge requirements for coach training inlcude:

a. The theoretical foundation of the Life Skills course; its structure, concepts and nature of training;

b. The heuristics of problem solving;

c. The principles of learning; the affective, cognitive and psychomotor domains;

d. Dynamics of personality, community family, leisure, time, job. Cultures of the disadvantaged, the Indian and Metis;

e. Group dynamics, performance centred counselling, and ethics of coaching;

f. Theoretical background which is integrated with the skills listed in the other rubrics.

3. Lesson Planning and Preparation Skills. By acquiring competencies in the following areas, and by developing systematic methods in his self-management, the coach gains the self-confidence necessary to perform his job. The coach-in-training learns effective behaviors in:

a. Developing efficient study habits;

b. Reviewing the Life Skills lessons and the multi-media kits, anticipating room settings and timings, arranging for equipment, guests, speakers, tours, films, and displays;

c. Planning his own role, and arranging for rehearsals.

4. Lesson Presentation Skills. The coach develops the behavioral skills required to facilitate the learning process in the implementation of Life Skills lessons. These include:

a. Skills in questioning, skills in recording, categorizing and summarizing data, and reporting outcomes and information to the group;

b. Motivating students in the classroom, planning activities with the students, leading discussion groups, and using non-directive counselling techniques;

c. Techniques of role playing, conducting the case method, and organizing "group-on-group" situations;

d. Operation and utilization of audio-visual media; using videotape equipment for recording and playback, using film, film strip, and overhead and opaque projectors, using cassette and reel to reel audio recorders; creating simple visual aids and displays; selecting the most appropriate medium to present a concept.

5. Problem Solving Skills. The Life Skills course uses the approach of applied problem solving. The coach needs to be proficient at solving Life Skills problems and Instructional problems, and develops the following competencies;

a. Basic communication skills such as speaking, checking for understanding, listening, identifying breakdown in person-to-person communication, using gestures and other non-verbal forms to communicate;

b. Applying a problem-solving system and sub-systems such as describing the situation, defining the problem, selecting alternatives, choosing a solution, applying the solution and evaluating the results.

c. Secondary problem solving techniques such as deferring judgment, brainstorming, gathering facts, combining ideas, re-arranging, enlarging and reducing ideas.

6. Evaluation Skills. The coach's ability to evaluate is integral to the learning process which takes place in any of the skills mentioned above. In some cases the process of evaluation can not be divorced from the major skill because in and of itself it is of an evaluative nature. For instance, the sk skill of "giving and receiving feedback" falls into this category. Other evaluation skills in which the coach develops competency are:

a. Performance Evaluation Skills. Observing, analyzing and evaluating his own performance and that of his peers and the students to identify strengths and weaknesses; feeding back evaluation data; using techniques for the development of student self-evaluation skills.

b. Lesson Evaluation Skills. Evaluating the effectiveness of the Life Skills course and individual lessons through his own observations and through the observations made by the students.

c. Administering and scoring student aptitude and ability tests.

A considerable portion of the training program is devoted to practicums, which combine and integrate the skills listed above. The performance of each coach in each of these sessions is videotaped and then played for self, peer and supervisor appraisal. The context and order within which the coaches participate in the practicums are: skill sessions centred on micro-coaching modules of specific learning activities and desired outcomes; Life Skills lessons in whole or in part given to their peers; Life Skills lessons given to the students in the Contact Laboratory phase.

Evaluation

A coach training program requires a carefully designed, evaluation system which in turn can support the re-development of the program. Bowers, Masia and Medley suggest three characteristics that all such programs of evaluation should have, if they are to achieve their goals. "First, the training effort should be evaluative in the sense that information relating to the amount of success of the program can be identified. Second, the training effort should be diagnostic in that one can make judgments about the relative effectiveness of different aspects or parts of the training program. Finally, the training effort should be heuristic, that is, the information derived from the program appraisal should give us distinct clues as to the 'why' of the differential results obtained."

Effective evaluation starts at the beginning of the project and operates continuously. Indeed, it must be planned as a unit from the beginning and charged with the tasks of:

1. Gathering information about coach progress and feeding this information back to the coach and his supervisor in a form that will be useful in facilitating the coach's progress through the program;
2. Providing the training programme with the information it needs to facilitate constructive re-design and re-development;
3. Gathering and analyzing data for research purposes.

In studying the evaluation problem it seems that coaching behaviors could be organized into three areas that would lend themselves to possible measurement:

1. Coach behaviors in the classroom;

2. Non-classroom behaviors of coaches and other coach characteristics;

3. Observable effects on students.

Many of the studies of evaluation to date, have been based on the assumption that the major evaluation effort should assess the classroom performance of teachers (coaches); not that the measurement of effects on students or of other teacher characteristics is considered unimportant. But "the assessment of classroom performance [is] seen as having central importance."

The approach to evaluating the performance of the coach is influenced by the work of William R. Tracey and by a taxonomy of techniques for analyzing teacher classroom behavior which is found in Usdan and Bertolaet (eds.) Teachers for the Disadvantaged, (pp. 225 to 229). The latter is based mainly on two studies; a paper cataloguing and reviewing techniques for the objective analysis of classroom behavior, prepared by Karl Openshaw; and a paper prepared by Bertram Masia listing and reviewing the measurement instruments available from the behavioral sciences.

The principal method used to evaluate the classroom performances of the coaches centres on the use of videotape recordings and an

"Evaluation Form for Life Skills Coaches" described in a later paragraph. These provide immediate feedback, and the audiovisual evidence is supported by self-evaluations by peer-appraisals of the lesson, and when necessary, an evaluation by the supervisor dealing with the effectiveness and proficiency of the coach in performing specific tasks.

The evaluation of coach behaviors in, and resulting from the Human Relations Laboratory Experience would probably be classified as normative with respect to outcome. The focus is on receiving feedback from other members of the group. The process begins when the coach-in-training exposes characteristic styles of relating to others in the group and receives reactions of others to his behavior. This mainly takes a verbal form, however rating and ranking forms pertaining to certain characteristics are also used.

During the Contact Laboratory Phase of the Coach Training program the effect that the coach has upon the students is observed by his peers and his supervisor. The observers usually view the classroom interaction through one-way glass. The performance of the coach is also videotaped for subsequent analysis. At the end of the lesson the students evaluate amongst other things the performance of the coach.

Unfortunately, few, if any, instruments exist that could be used directly for our evaluative purposes. As is usually the case, instruments developed for one specific purpose are seldom very useful for any other. In most cases the evaluation instruments used in the Coach Training program are combinations or modifications of other instruments, or techniques already in existence. The instruments in use fall into four major categories:

1. Coach Performance in the Classroom. The "Evaluation Form for Life Skill Coaching" and an accompanying guide is designed to rate the performance of the coach in the six areas of competency described earlier in this paper. It is adapted from William Tracey's "Guide to the Evaluation of Instruction" and includes ideas from Masia's taxonomy.

2. Coach Behavior in the Human Relations Laboratory. The instruments used are a combination or modification of ranking and rating instruments developed by institutes such as the NTL of the Institute of Applied Behavioral Sciences.

3. Coach Training Program. At the end of each week the coaches-in-training are required to evaluate and rate the content of the training program, the assigned readings and literature, the methodology used and the performance of their instructors. These rating forms are designed at times by the instructors and on other occasions by the coaches.

4. Data for Research Purposes. The Research staff has access to all of the evaluation data collected during the training

> program. In addition, they administer various personality, aptitude and ability tests, and analyze and correlate the data with previous findings. These form the basis for subsequent adjustments to the training program and as a basis for study of selection criteria for coach candidates.

For the coach who has been 'trained', there must be continuing feedback; not only from supervisor to coach, and from coach to coach but also in the form of self-evaluation. Hopefully, the coach looks to the day when he can successfully and objectively evaluate his own behaviors, by the reaction and response on the part of the students to his performance.

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EVALUATING THE LIFE SKILLS COURSE

- L. A. Lamrock

Evaluation may be defined as "the provision of information through formal means, such as criteria, measurement, and statistics to supply rational bases for making judgments which are inherent in decision situations" (Stufflebeam, 1968). Stated simply, evaluation provides information for decision-making.

Rigorous evaluation in education is crucial because of the need to better understand educational deficiencies and to form effective educational policies. Systematic and rigorous evaluation can prevent the error of declaring a program a success or a failure when it was only tried in a single circumstance where unknown factors dictated the results. Commonly, course developers must rely on personal judgment and intuition; program materials are tried out and revised entirely on the basis of casual observation, with little effort devoted to systematic research. Such evaluation activities do not allow for the systematic improvement of the program nor evaluation of the objectives, nor do they have the level of credibility required to defend decisions.

On the other hand, efforts to implement systematic and rigorous evaluation in educational projects has too often meant the borrowing of techniques from other fields where problems were thought to be similar to those in education. Unfortunately, this practice has resulted

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in application of techniques never intended to meet educational requirements: the application of experimental design for example, to evaluation problems seems reasonable, since experimental research has been used to test hypotheses about the effects of specific treatments; however, its use in educational evaluation conflicts with the principle that evaluation should contribute to the continuous improvement of a program. Such design yields data about gross total program effects and then only in retrospect, and cannot possibly meet developmental needs of the program. In addition, the typical experimental design requires a control over variables nearly impossible to achieve in educational settings. This control, essential in the execution of a good experimental design, limits the freedom necessary for program development.

It should not be concluded from this argument that the level of rigour required to establish reliability and validity in evaluation can be compromised, but rather that new methods are needed to effect them. This is not to say that existing methodology should be discarded, but rather that those which are applicable must be supplemented with specialized forms of evaluation designed to serve the needs of education.

Stufflebeam (1968) offers an educational evaluation model which distinguishes between "product" evaluation and "process" evaluation. Scriven (1967) offers a similar distinction between what he labels "summative" evaluation and "formative" evaluation. The product summative phase determines the effectiveness of a project after it has run full cycle. Evaluation at this point determines whether or not the developed innovation has met its objectives; in contrast, the process-formative phase provides periodic feedback to those responsible for continuous refinement and development of plans and procedures. The overall objective of process evaluation is to identify and monitor on a continuous basis the potential sources of failure in a project.

There is no clear cut distinction between these two phases: process evaluation does not stop before product evaluation starts, but continues even into the product evaluation stage. Nevertheless, thinking about curriculum development in terms of product and process phases helps determine the most applicable evaluative techniques and data collection procedures.

Product evaluation requires the level of control characteristic of experimental design; in contrast, process evaluation does not require control over the assignment of subjects to treatment or that the treatment be held constant. Thus under process evaluation the evaluator monitors the total situation by using the most sensitive non-intervening data collection devises and techniques obtainable on crucial aspects of the project. Such evaluation is multivariate and does not specify all the important variables before a project is initiated. Because curriculum development is continuous, process evaluation aims at integrating a number of studies employing different methods of data collection in a total research study. Each of the studies may have special methodological problems, but the flaws rarely coincide in all of them and conclusions can be reached by summarizing the results from each.

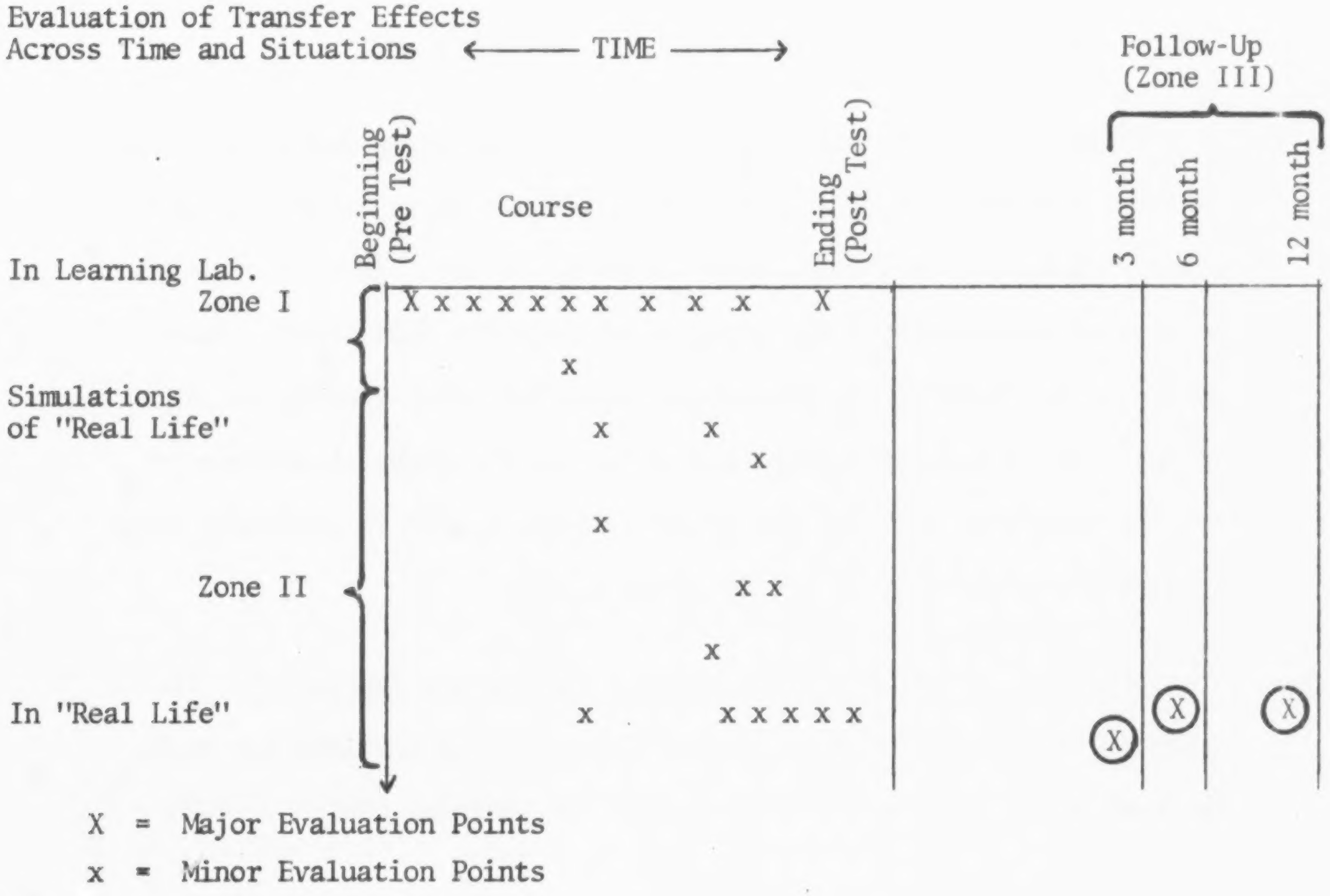
In general, it seems that evaluators have overlooked the opportunity to have real impact on the directions of educational change by limiting their evaluation to final (product) assessment and neglecting process evaluation. Certainly product evaluation is necessary, but it is process evaluation that identifies the need for revisions when the opportunities for revisions still exist. It seems better to extract what we can while projects are still fluid than to wait for more reliable findings about which too often nothing can be done.

The use of the term "experimental" in educational projects often does not refer to controlled manipulation, measurement and comparison of procedures and treatments, but to the investigation of innovative methods of human resource development. Assuming a continuous process in curriculum improvement, educational evaluation aims at an integration of research and development to provide a rational basis for evaluating the effectiveness of a training course in achieving its objectives.

Process/product evaluation integrates different methods into a total research study: direct observations create a global picture;

surveys and standardized tests supply objective data to identify individual and group differences; case studies offer a connected sequence of events to help determine and explain individual and group changes; finally the experiment provides a controlled test of the effectiveness of specific variables, and the overall research provides for an interweaving of the various methods.

As well as the various modes of data gathering, there are three zones during which the various techniques of data gathering are employed. (See Fig. 1.)


Evaluation of Transfer Effects Across Time and Situations

← TIME →
Follow-Up (Zone III)
Beginning (Pre Test)
Course
Ending (Post Test)
3 month
6 month
12 month
In Learning Lab.
Zone I
Simulations of "Real Life"
Zone II
In "Real Life"
X x x x x x x x x x X
x
x x
x
x
x x
x
x x x x x x
X
X
X

X = Major Evaluation Points

x = Minor Evaluation Points

Fig. 1

Zone One: Study of Course Effects in the Laboratory. Extensive biographical data with ability, interest, attitudinal and personality data is collected on each student. These procedures assemble data for a rather complete picture of the characteristics of each individual student. Additional data is gathered throughout the course. The coaches keep a daily log of their impressions and evaluations of the success of lessons, problems which arise, and student reponses to the program. In addition, rating scales are filled out by both coaches and students. One of the major objectives of the evaluation is to identify those with whom the course is effective. Therefore, post-course measures are taken and the appropriate statistical analyses are performed.

Since the Life Skills Course emphasizes the group and group-process (interactive behavior of students and coaches), there is considerable study of group process using observation schedules. This information permits an assessment of the group as well as the individual. Each lesson is equipped with a behavioral objective which ideally should be met. The observation schedules permit us to establish whether or not the objective has been met as well as being able to determine which predicted behaviors occur in any given lesson.

Zone Two: Study of Course Effects Outside the Laboratory. The ultimate test of the effects of Life Skills Course involves how much application of the skill occurs outside the training context. Each lesson has an application phase which, especially in the later stages of the course, involves doing something "outside". This is the start of the true testing effects of the course. If there is no transfer of skills and knowledge outside the Life Skills laboratory, then the goal of the course has not been achieved. If there is no transfer during the course then there is little likelihood that there will be transfer after the course is finished. Thus data is gathered from several sources (self report, objective measures where possible) as to how much transfer occurs.

Zone Three: Post Course Evaluation - Follow-Up Studies. No evaluation procedure can be considered adequate if there is no follow-up of the effects of the course. This has been a consistent weakness in many programs and the plan and procedures for the follow-up of all Life Skills graduates is being developed. This study involves considerable time and effort but is essential to any evaluation process.

Implementation of the Evaluation System: Life Skills Intake K, November, 1970.

Background Information. The Life Skills Course has as its main objective the development of problem solving skills in the students who take the course; they use these skills to solve personal problems arising from five areas of life responsibilities: self, job, leisure, community and family.

Three revisions of the Life Skills Course have now been implemented. The course received its first test beginning in February, 1969. This version emphasized group processes as a means of accomplishing behavioral change. A test of a partial revision began in June of 1969. This course retained the group process but added an emphasis on behavioral objectives. In January, 1970, a further revision included more precisely stated behavioral objectives and added cognitive materials; the course reduced the emphasis on group process. Midway through the training, observation revealed the group effectiveness had failed to develop. An immediate adjustment in the course to meet this need included more lesson material on group process. From observations accumulated during the January 1970 trial of the course, the preparation of another revision started to include a new balance between cognitive materials, behavioral objectives, and group process. With the new overall objective of problem-solving incorporated into this revision, a test of the first twenty lessons started with Intakes H, I, and J in June of 1970. These students completed their training on lessons from an earlier revision.

The Life Skills Course emphasizing the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of learning, depends to some extent on the development of effective group behaviors and stresses problem-solving skills. Coaches, working under the direction of a supervisor implement the course. The lessons prescribe the content and process to be followed by the coach as he guides students through the course.

The Life Skills Coach Training Course develops as a response to the coach training needs made evident by implementation of the Life Skills Course.

Aim of this test of the Life Skills Course. The test proposed for Intake K permits the collection of data on certain specific questions, and its interpretation against a rather fully conceptualized and more fully developed Life Skills Course.

The questions to be answered in this test of the course follow:

1. Which of the behavioral changes specified for the students actually occur as a result of the course?

2. What behavioral changes actually occur as a result of the course, but are not specified in the objectives?

3. In what respects does the Life Skills Course fail to provide the opportunity necessary for the students to achieve the specified behavioral changes?

4. Are the behavioral changes specified for the course a function of time?

5. Does achievement of a Grade X certificate, through academic upgrading only, result in the same behavioral changes as those specified in the Life Skills Course?

6. Assuming that Life Skills Students have expectations for a "traditional learning setting," will the provision of such a setting result in more efficient development of specified behavioral change?

7. Do the techniques of skill training produce specified behavioral changes more efficiently than those techniques specified in the Life Skills Course prescription?

8. In what ways does the precision required for the implementation of the techniques of skill training refine the definition of the behavioral objectives in the Life Skills course?

9. In what ways do the written lesson materials fail to give adequate guidance to the coach for effective lesson implementation. (Timings, sequence of lessons, clarity of direction, completeness of direction.)

10. What skills do the coaches lack in order to objectively achieve behavioral change in students?

11. What adaptations in the Life Skills Course (written materials, coach behaviors, support services, and student groupings) need to be made for its effective use with young (age 18-25) students?

Alternative Ways of Meeting the Goals of this Development Directive. Table I lists possible design alternatives and identifies the questions which the possible alternatives would answer.

TABLE I: Possible Design Alternatives

	TREATMENT	N	ANSWERS DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONS
ALT. #1	Present method and Materials	12	3, 9,10,
ALT. #2	Present method and Materials	12	3, 9,10,
	Control group: pre, mid, and post testing (No training)	12	1,2, 4,
ALT. #3	Present Method and Materials	12	3, 9,10,
	Control group: pre, mid, and post testing (No training)	24	1,2, 4,
	Manpower Upgrading Students: pre, mid and post testing (No L/S training)	24	5,

	TREATMENT	N	ANSWERS DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONS
ALT. #4	Present Method and Materials	12	3, 9,10,
	Control group: pre, mid, and post testing (No training)	24	1,2, 4,
	Manpower Upgrading Students: pre,mid and post testing (No L/S training)	24	5,
	Life Skills materials used with a didactic-introduction to the course	12	6,
ALT. #5	Present Method and Materials	12	3, 9,10,
	Control group: pre, mid, and post testing (No training)	24	1,2, 4,
	Manpower Upgrading Students: pre, mid and post testing (No L/S training)	24	5,
	Life Skills materials used with a didactic-introduction to the course	12	6,
	Life Skills Material used with skill training techniques	12	7,8,
ALT. #6	Present Method and Materials	12	3, 9,10,
	Control group: pre, mid, and post testing (No training)	24	1,2, 4,
	Manpower Upgrading Students: pre, mid and post testing (No L/S training)	24	5,
	Life Skills materials used with a didactic-introduction to the course	12	6,

ALT. #6	Life Skills Material used with skill training techniques	12	7,8,
	Present Life Skills materials and methods adapted to young (18-25) students	12	11,

Recommended Alternative. The implementation of alternative No. 6 will provide relevant and specific data on which to objectively answer the proposed development questions.

The Plan

Aim: To implement alternative No. 6 during the period of time from 2 Nov. 70 to 12 Mar. 71.

TASK SUMMARY

ACTION	PLACE	TIME	RESPONSIBILITY	METHODS	TO ANSWER DEVELOPMENTAL QUESTIONS
Recruitment and selection of 48 students and 48 persons for control groups.	Prince Albert	Ref. Recruit. Guide	Student Services Section	Ref. Recruit. Guide	
Pre-test treatment groups.	Training Lab.	Ref. Recruit. Guide	Supervisor of Research	Ref. Research Directive Annex #1	1,2,3,4,5,6,7, 11
Pre-test control groups.	Training Lab.	Ref. Recruit. Guide	Supervisor of Research	Ref. Research Directive Annex #1	1,2,3,4,5,6,7, 11
Training of treatment groups.	Training Lab.	2 Nov. 70	Supervisor of Training	Ref. Prologue, Overview Life Skills Lesson Plans	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8, 11.
Regular (daily and Weekly) data collection, analysis and interpretation.	Training Lab.	2 Nov. 70 to 30 Apr.	Supervisor of Research	Ref. Standard Progress Report Form. Report on Student Achievement of Lesson Objective	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9, 11,
Mid-term testing	Training Lab.	11 Jan. 71	Supervisor of Research	Life Skills Lesson Evaluation Guide	1,2,3, 6,7, 11,
Post testing	Training Lab.	Week of 15 Mar. 71	Supervisor of Research		1,2,3,4,5,6,7, 11,

TASK SUMMARY (Cont'd)

ACTION	PLACE	TIME	RESPONSIBILITY	METHODS	TO ANSWER DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONS
Final Revision	Dev. Lab.	4 Jan. 71 30 Apr. 71	Supervisor of Development	Ref.	8, 11,
Followup	Training Lab.	14 June	Supervisor of Research	Ref.	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8, 11,
Observation of coaching	Training Lab.	2 Nov. 70 to 12 Mar. 71	Supervisor of Training and Supervisor of Coach training.	Ref.	10,

Future Developments. Based on the data obtained from the test "Intake K":

1. The written course materials will receive a revision and final editing.

2. The Life Skills Coach Training Course will receive a further revision.

3. The test, "Intake K" will identify the need for and provide data for the development of a "Young Person's Life Skills Course."

4. The effect of a "short course" of 2-3 days should be tested as a necessary followup for the Life Skill student.

Life Skills Evaluation Methods and Procedures

1. Observation by Research Personnel

   1.1 Purpose: To identify behaviors which occur in response to specific lessons.

   1.2 Criteria: The behaviors must be observable: word, movement, facial expression, body attitude, associations with other persons in the learning group. The observer does not rate the quality of a behavior; he notes only its presence.

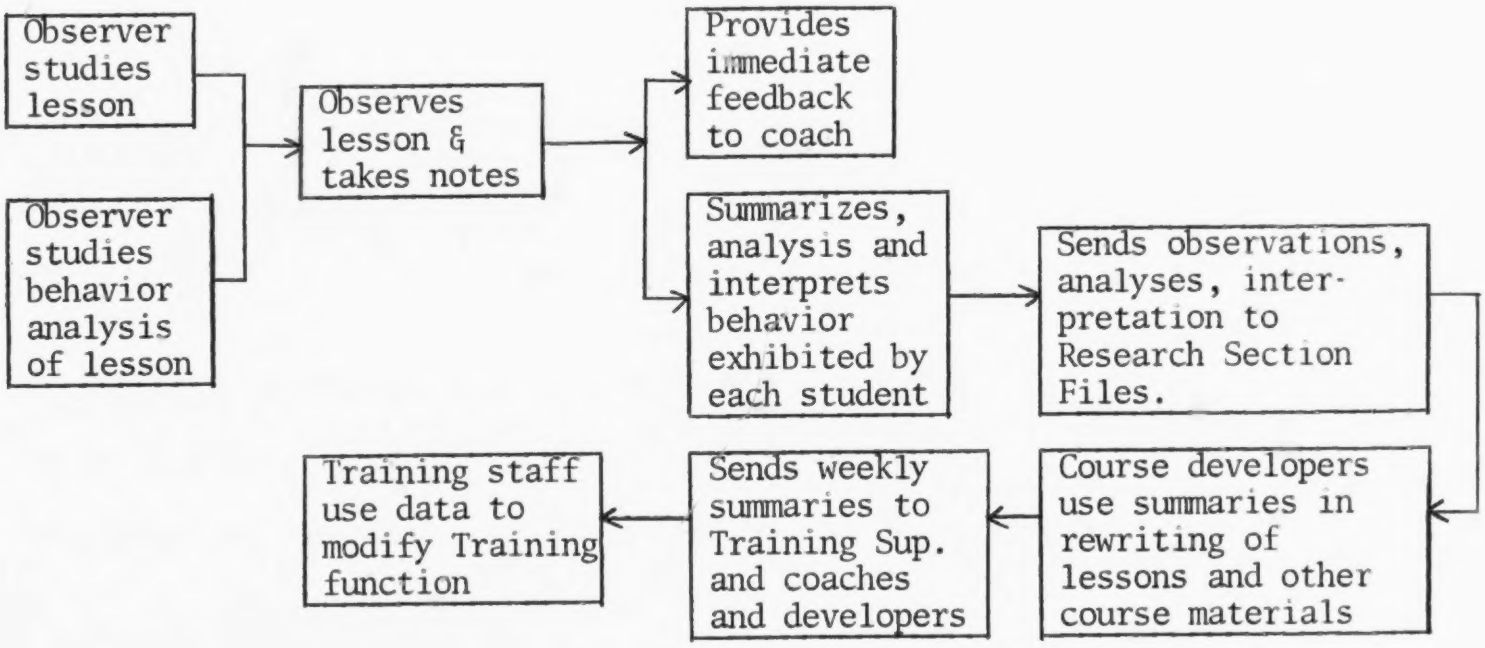
1.3 Decisions:

1.3.1 The coach may use these records to modify his coaching behaviors to bring about desired changes in his group. He uses these immediately.

1.3.2 The lesson developer uses the records to substitute new directions in the written lesson materials or to add new directions if he can establish the relevance between the noted behavior and the lesson.

1.3.3 These observations provide the empirical basis for the description of the hypothesized Life Skills Process Content model. These observations will determine the retention and modification of the model.

1.4 Procedure: All training groups are observed through all lessons by trained observers from the research section. A behavior analysis which reflects behaviors expected in the lesson is used as a guide by the observer. He records a summary of behaviors exhibited by each group member at the end of each session. Directions for the use and understanding of the observation report form and the observers report form are found at Appendix A.


Observer studies lesson
Observer studies behavior analysis of lesson
Observes lesson & takes notes
Provides immediate feedback to coach
Summarizes, analysis and interprets behavior exhibited by each student
Sends observations, analyses, interpretation to Research Section Files.
Course developers use summaries in rewriting of lessons and other course materials
Sends weekly summaries to Training Sup. and coaches and developers
Training staff use data to modify Training function

2. Coach's Monthly Rating of Students

2.1 Purpose: To document individual student progress over time.

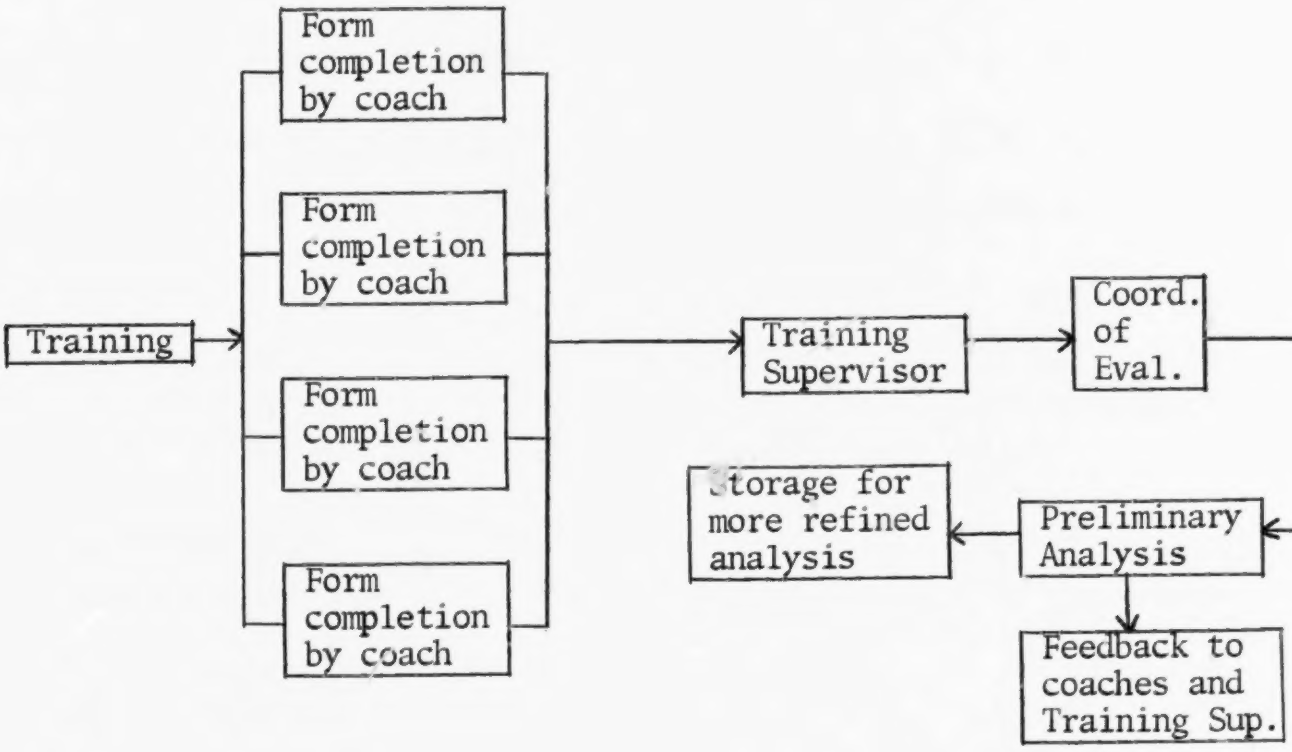
2.2 Criteria: The presence of certain specified behaviors believed to be important indices of individual development.

2.3 Decisions:

2.3.1 The coach determines which behaviors need more emphasis for each group member.

2.3.2 The developer can recommend to coaches effective coaching behaviors by specifying them in rewritten lessons.

2.4 Procedure: A form "The Rating of Life Skills Students by Coaches" which allows the coach to document progress has been devised. The form includes behaviors considered indices of both group and individual progress. Appendix B provides a copy of the form used.


Training
Form completion by coach
Form completion by coach
Form completion by coach
Form completion by coach
Training Supervisor
Coord. of Eval.
Preliminary Analysis
Storage for more refined analysis
Feedback to coaches and Training Sup.

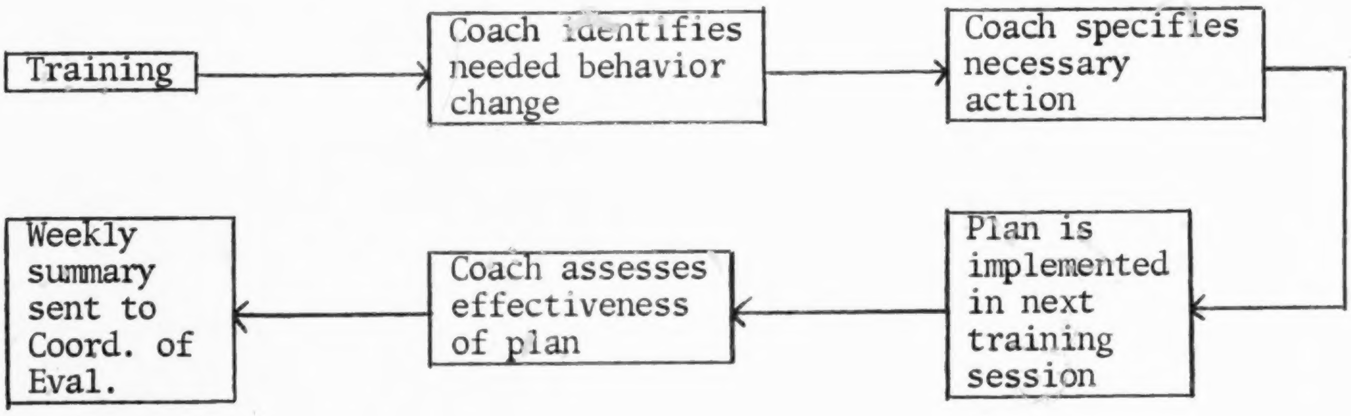
3. Coach's Daily Evaluation of Students

3.1 Purpose: To permit the coach to specify which skills need emphasis for each student, and to specify the technique to bring about the desired behavior.

3.2 Criteria: The coach's dissatisfaction with the development of a particular skill by a student and his own ability to bring about the change.

3.3 Decisions: The coach modifies his instructional behaviors according to the need implied by his observations.

3.4 Procedure: After each training session the coach identifies a needed behavior change for each group member and specifies the action necessary to bring about the change. He implements his plan in the next session, after which he assesses its effectiveness. Appendix C provides a copy of the form used.


Training
Coach identifies needed behavior change
Coach specifies necessary action
Plan is implemented in next training session
Coach assesses effectiveness of plan
Weekly summary sent to Coord. of Eval.

4. Coach's and Observer's Weekly Evaluation of Group Development: Interpersonal Relations Skills.

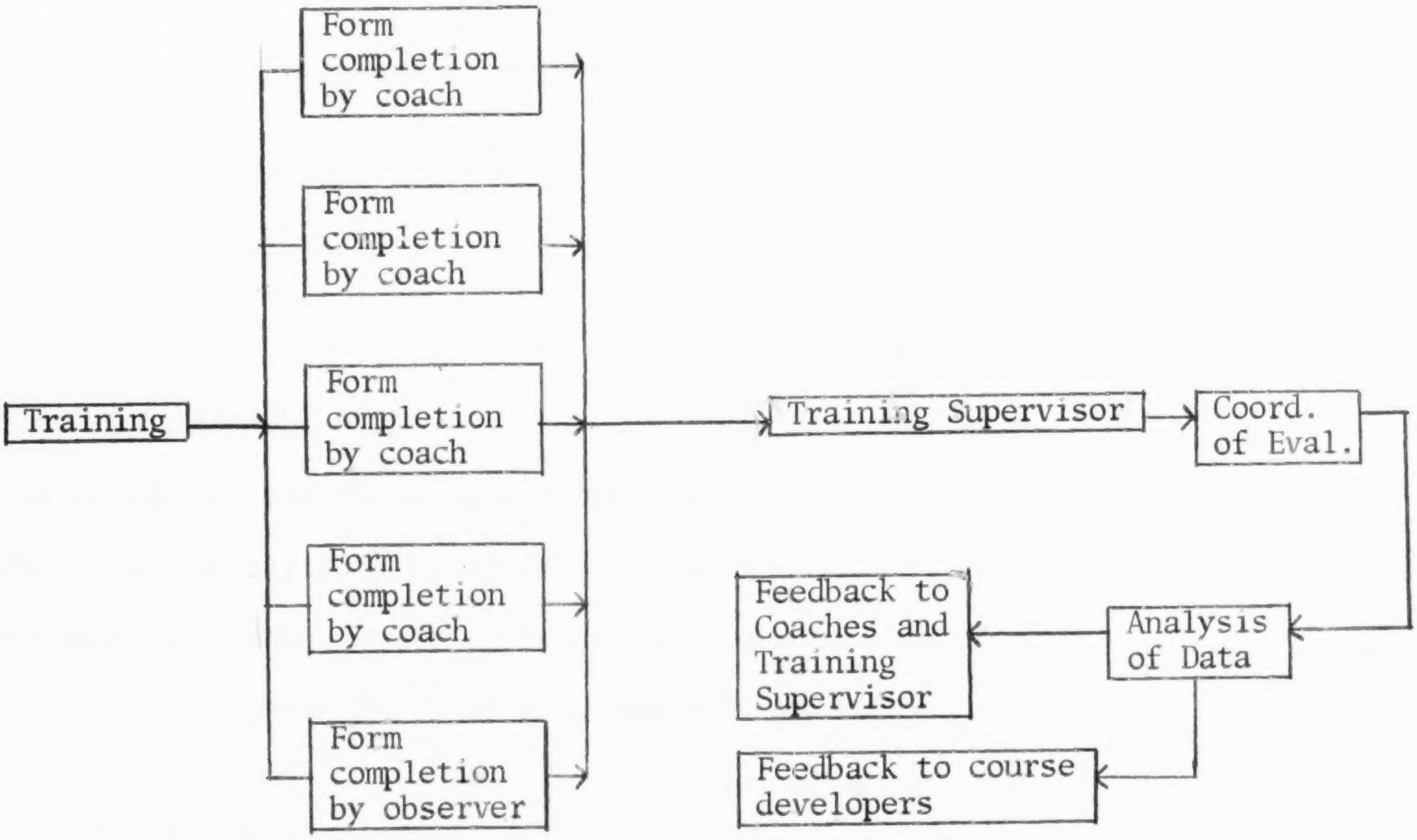
4.1 Purpose: to improve the group interaction.

4.2 Criteria: The observer's subjective estimate of "group development" on specified scales.

4.3 Decisions

4.3.1 To change coach behaviors, or lesson sequence to bring about group development basic to individual development.

4.4 Procedure: This short rating form permits the coach and observer to assess the general development of the group after each training session. (See Appendix D.)


Training
Form completion by coach
Form completion by coach
Form completion by coach
Form completion by coach
Form completion by observer
Training Supervisor
Coord. of Eval.
Analysis of Data
Feedback to Coaches and Training Supervisor
Feedback to course developers

5. Pencil and Paper Tests

5.1 Purpose: To isolate variables related to progress and to document changes thought to be due to the effects of the Life Skills training.

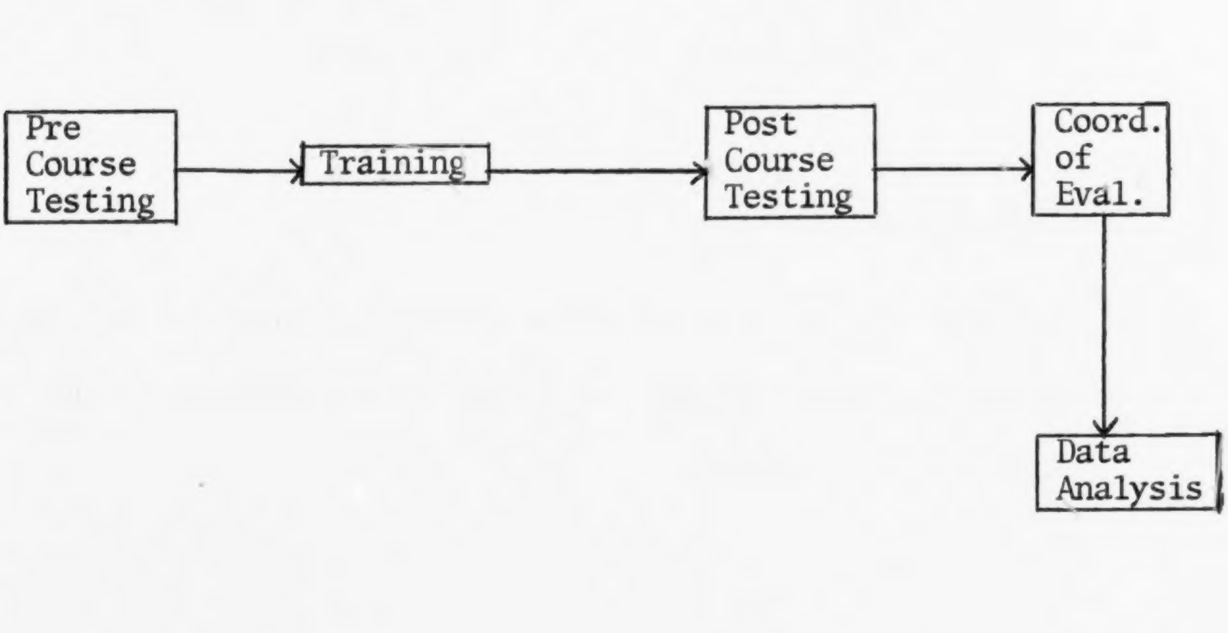
5.2 Criteria: The scores students achieve on specified pencil and paper tests prior to training and on the completion of the Life Skills course.

5.3 Decisions:

5.3.1 To decide the test scores which reliably predict success for prospective Life Skills students.

5.3.2 To identify which changes in attitude, as reflected by test scores, occur as a result of the Life Skills Course.

5.4 Procedures: A number of tests have been identified as useful in determining personality changes which are thought to be relative to the objectives of the Life Skills Course. These tests have been revised for use with our population and are administered pre and post course. (See Appendix A5-8.)


Pre Course Testing
Training
Post Course Testing
Coord. of Eval.
Data Analysis

6. Coach and Developer Lesson Evaluation

6.1 Purpose: To allow the course developers to assess the effectiveness of the course materials.

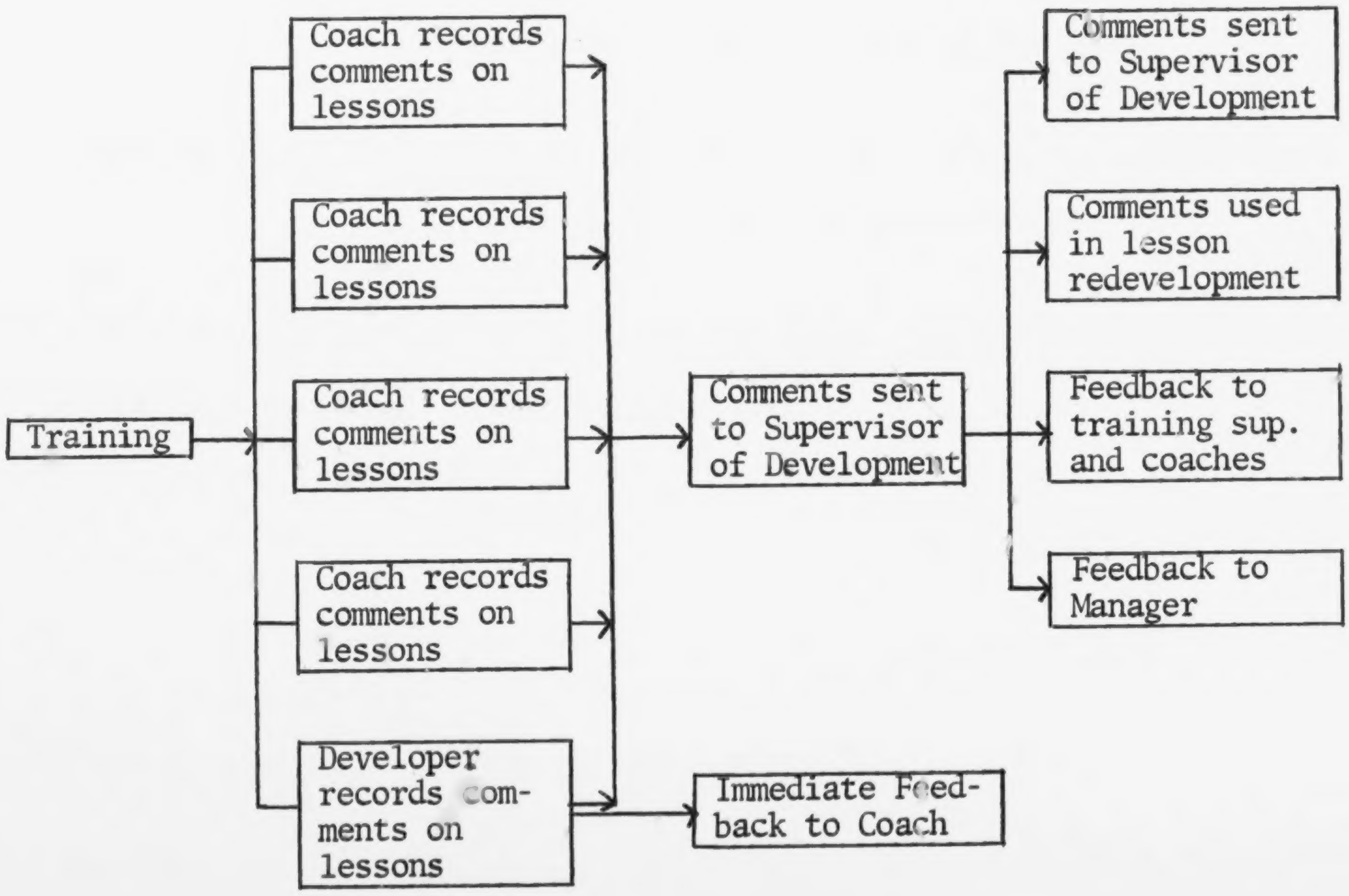
6.2 Criteria: Coach and student expressions of satisfaction with lesson content and procedures; the developers satisfaction that instructions and methodologies are sufficiently explicit.

6.3 Decisions:

6.3.1 To eliminate weak or wrong instructions in the lessons.

6.3.2 To decide on the relevance of a lesson topic and its sequencing.

6.4 Procedures: After each session the coach records his comments on the quality of direction and general adequacy of the written materials. Observers from the development section record similar comments. These comments are then used in the lesson redevelopment.


Training
Coach records comments on lessons
Coach records comments on lessons
Coach records comments on lessons
Coach records comments on lessons
Developer records comments on lessons
Comments sent to Supervisor of Development
Immediate Feedback to Coach
Comments sent to Supervisor of Development
Comments used in lesson redevelopment
Feedback to training sup. and coaches
Feedback to Manager

7. Recording of Informal Remarks by Coaches

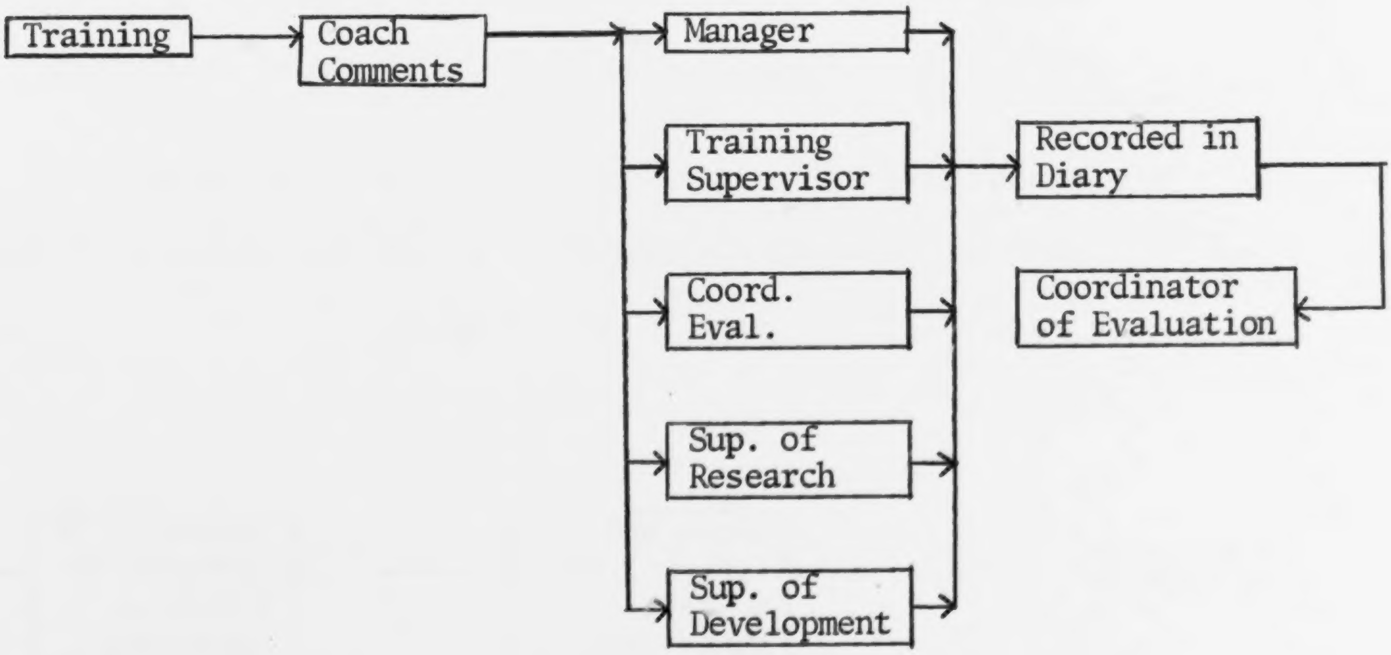
7.1 Purpose: To capture coaches remarks about training progress which may be made in an informal setting and will therefore, often escape the more structured methods of data collection.

7.2 Criteria: The comment must be spoken or indicated clearly in a non-verbal manner; preferably a voluntary remark.

7.3 Decisions:

7.3.1 To decide on the need for further investigation and to assist in assessing other data.

7.4 Procedures: Frequently coaches make evaluative remarks regarding group process in an informal setting. These remarks are recorded in a diary for subsequent analysis.


Training
Coach Comments
Manager
Training Supervisor
Coord. Eval.
Sup. of Research
Sup. of Development
Recorded in Diary
Coordinator of Evaluation

8. Training Supervisors Summary of Coach's Daily Evaluation

8.1 Purpose: To document information which may result from meetings between the training supervisor and coaches.

8.2 Criteria: The comment has an evaluative quality; it refers to student progress, quality of lesson materials, or satisfaction with the development of the group.

8.3 Decisions:

8.3.1 Training supervisor can determine the effectiveness of the approach of the coach under an array of circumstances.

8.3.2 Areas of concern to which the present Life Skills Course does not address itself can be determined.

8.3 Procedures: After each training session the coaches meet with the training supervisor to discuss the progress of the group and these comments are recorded.

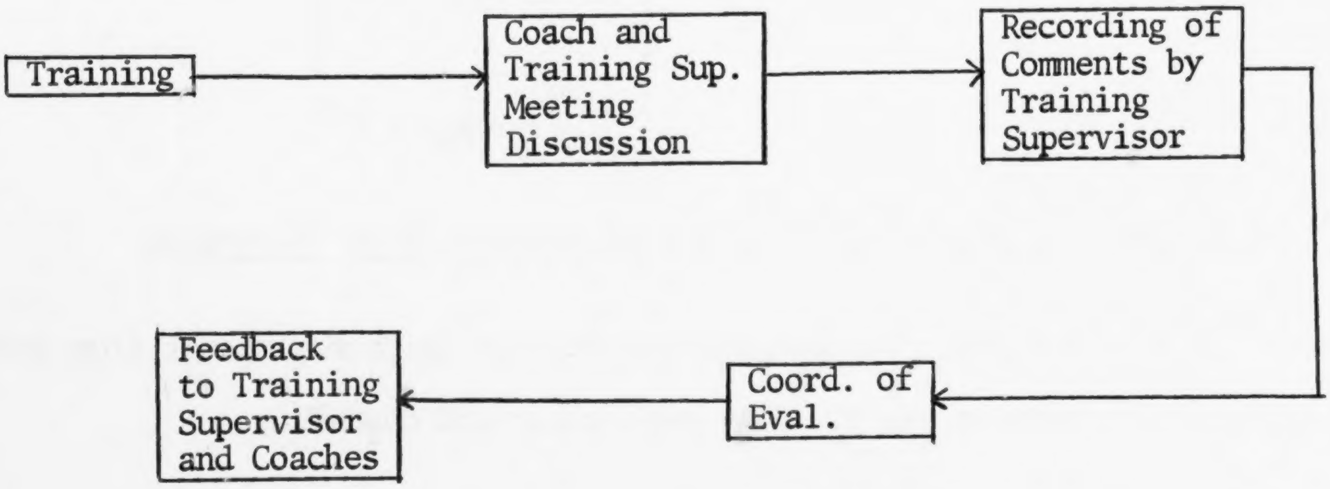

Training
Coach and Training Sup. Meeting Discussion
Recording of Comments by Training Supervisor
Coord. of Eval.
Feedback to Training Supervisor and Coaches

Table II summarizes the methods discussed and their application to the development objectives.

TABLE II - SUMMARY OF METHODS & OBJECTIVES

Development Objectives	Methods								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	*
1. Which of the behavioral changes specified for the students actually occur as a result of the course?	✓	✓	✓		✓				
2. What behavioral changes actually occur as a result of the course, but are not specified in the objectives?	✓	✓	✓						
3. In what respects does the Life Skills Course fail to provide the opportunity necessary for the students to achieve the specified behavioral changes?			✓			✓	✓	✓	
4. Are the behavioral changes specified for the course a function of time?	✓	✓	✓						
5. Does achievement of Grade X certificate, through academic upgrading only, result in the same behavioral changes as those specified in the Life Skills Course?					✓				
6. Assuming that Life Skills Students have expectations for a "traditional learning setting," will the provision of such a setting result in more efficient development of specified behavioral change?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
7. Do the techniques of skill training produce specified behavioral changes more efficiently than those techniques specified in the prescribed Life Skills Course?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	

TABLE II SUMMARY OF METHODS & OBJECTIVES (Cont'd)

Development Objectives	Methods							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 *
8. In what ways does the precision required for the implementation of the techniques of skill training refine the definition of the behavioral objectives in the Life Skills Course?	✓		✓				✓	✓
9. In what ways do the written lesson materials fail to give adequate guidance to the coach for effective lesson implementation. (Timings, sequence of lessons, clarity of direction, completeness of direction.)						✓	✓	✓
10. What skills do the coaches lack in order to objectively achieve behavioral change in students?			✓			✓	✓	✓
11. What adaptations in the Life Skills Course (written materials, coach behaviors, support services, and student groupings) need to be made for its effective use with young (age 18 - 25) students?			✓			✓	✓	✓

* refers to methods described in body of the text.

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APPENDIX SUMMARY

Appendix A:	Directions for Use of the Understanding of Observation Report Form
Appendix B:	Ratings of Life Skills Students by Coaches
Appendix C:	Evaluation Form - Facilitating Effective Group Behaviors
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NOTE: Appendices Available on Request from Saskatchewan NewStart Incorporated.

BEHAVIORAL SKILL AND ROLE TRAINING APPROACH TO LIFE SKILLS

- Phillip W. Warren

This paper describes some of the preliminary development done in a supplementary approach to Life Skills Training. At this time, the approach has not been tested in a rigorous manner and the paper consists mainly of a statement of the theoretical background principles and the desired end state of training methods which we envision at this time. One must not infer that we have in fact successfully operationalized and evaluated the principles and methodologies described here.

Reasons for Developing This Approach to Life Skills

1. Motivational Problems. In the Life Skills Course, the element of motivation is as important as that of instruction. Any adult needing basic education and life skills will probably need some bolstering of his motivation - his motivation to enroll, to learn, to persevere, and to use what he learns. The Life Skills Course goal of changing the student's approach to life adds the challenge of motivating the student to use life skills outside the classroom and after course completion. The course attempts to lead students

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gradually to a point where personal use of life skills is the next logical development, facilitated by a great deal of practice under increasingly self-dependent circumstances while on course.

The training methods vary with the nature of the content, which can be classed into three main areas: 1. Information, 2. Formal Problem Solving Process and 3. Behavioral Skills. The first two are discussed very briefly with the major emphasis in this paper on training in Behavioral Skills.

Information: The main problem regarding information is to motivate the student to acquire it; the need for information for immediate purpose increases the intensity of the search. The students actively seek information on specific life problems they are trying to solve. The sources are varied: books, clippings from periodicals, films, filmstrips, audio-tapes, people whom the students interview, etc. The dynamics of the search for and use of information vary with the situation and the needs, abilities and preferences of the students. Some of the patterns are; all obtain the same information and discuss it; individuals or subgroups obtain different areas of information and act as "experts" in their particular area during later discussion; when the unforeseen need for some specific item of information arises during discussion, a student may volunteer to obtain it - perhaps by telephone during the session, or by consulting a reference book. Motivation is enhanced by the fact that the information is needed for an immediate purpose, is actively sought by the students, and is obtained from a variety of sources in a variety of ways which help maintain interest.

Problem Solving Process: This, being a logical process, is presented in a logical manner, through use of a prepared audio-tape which explains the process and leads the group through the use of the process in relation to a given problem. A motivational element is introduced by having the group first attempt to solve the problem without being made aware of any process involved. Their untutored effort is recorded and compared with the results they achieve in solving the same problem using the formal method. The motivational question is whether the students will use this logical system in solving their own personal problems. It is hoped that much practice in class reinforced by the requirement that they use the method out of class and report, will lead students to use the method by personal choice.

Behavioral Skills: The course aims to motivate the student to learn and use behavioral skills in class, outside class, and after the course has been completed. Repeated practice and evaluation plus the experience of using the skill in a real life situation, will enhance the likelihood that the student will use it freely when the need and opportunity arises.

Carl Rogers says of his approach to behavioral change in psychotherapy, "... working with a lack of conscious motivation in the individual is more difficult than working with the problem of psychosis. This [conclusion] is ... based .. on our general lack of success in trying to form a facilitative relationship with unmotivated 'normals' of low socio-educational status .... the absence of conscious desire for help presents a greater challenge to the therapist than the presence of psychosis." (Rogers, 1967, p. 184) The Life Skills Course seeks to develop "facilitative relationships" with and between people of low socio-educational status. They often lack awareness of and interest in group processes and do not see using a group approach for learning and helping. The typical incoming Life Skills student is not expecting or interested in Life Skills training; he comes for basic education. The typical attitude might be expressed as "I don't need life skills. I've made it this far in life without this course. All I need is grade 10 and I'll be set." Unfortunately most students have bought "The Great Training Robbery" and see the diploma as the key to jobs. Thus the typical student has, at best, only the vaguest awareness of the need for skills which are not related to technical job performance. In addition, some believe they are too old, too poor, or too dumb to change their lives. With these attitudes, the problem of "motivation" looms large. Thus, one purpose for this project was to provide techniques to deal with the problems of motivation of adult students of low socio-educational and economic status.

2. Individual Differences. Closely related to the problems of "motivation" are those generated by the different interests, personal problems, skills, knowledge, and learning styles of students. No one content curriculum or instructional methodology can fit all people. The "problem of match" (Hunt, 1961, pp. 267-288) has been with education for a long time and appropriate methods of individualizing courses are necessary to deal with matching the individual's interest/skill/knowledge/style to the learning environment. One assumption of this approach is that many of the problems of motivation can be overcome when a match can be made between the individual and the learning environment. Since there is a heavy emphasis on the use of the "Learning/Helping Group" in the Life Skills Course one type of problem arises when a few members of the group are very unskilled in some areas (e.g., contributing expressing their feelings, etc.) whereas the rest are about equal in their skill level. Methods need to be developed for concentrating on individuals and skills needing the most work so that the group can be more homogeneous in its skill level and thus work effectively as a "Learning/Helping Group."

3. General Programatic Benefits. Other reasons for this project related to the above problems but with added benefits were: a. to provide a clearer statement of the theory of learning presupposed in the Life Skills Course and a more explicit attempt to tie training methodology to theory; b. to provide a more precise definition of the skill objectives in behavioral terms; c. to provide a closer integration of the methodology of the Life Skills Coach Training Course with the Life Skills Course; and d. in general, to develop some "trouble shooting" methods for implementing the course and provide greater flexibility in course implementation, e.g., if something does not go as planned then there should be some suggested alternatives.

Theory Of An Optimum Training Environment In Behavioral Roles/Skills

This section provides a preliminary description of some of the basic principles which the project seeks to operationalize. The theory set out here is a combination of Kingsbury's (1964) "Learnviron" and Moore's (Moore, 1964; Moore and Anderson, 1969) "Clarifying Educational Environment".

1. Definition of Some Critical Concepts

It is useful to begin by constructing a model of the critical attributes of a student to see what he brings to the situation and what we are trying to alter when we place him in our training environment.

a. Plan: (Kingsbury, 1964) A plan is a situation or event created in the student's own cognitive/ideational/value universe; a conceptual construct, mental image, wish, model, goal or ideal (see Miller, Galanter and Pribram, 1960).

b. Control: (Kingsbury, 1964) Control involves handling the environment or oneself in such a way as to conform to a plan, i.e., the process of making a plan real. The three basic subprocesses in a cycle of control are Start, Change and Stop. To illustrate with an obvious example, if one is interested in driving a car he must have the necessary abilities to start it, to move it from place to place in the desired manner and to stop it at will. The three processes of control can be applied to any of the component abilities of the complex skill of driving a car.

c. Goal Set: (Kingsbury, 1964) The goal set is a collection of plans whose presence in the real world is desired by a student and whose realization is accompanied by satisfaction, happiness, relaxation, joy, and a sense of accomplishment.

d. Autotelic Activity: (Moore, 1964, p. 184) "... an activity [is] autotelic if engaging in it is done for its own sake rather than for obtaining rewards or avoiding punishments that have no inherent connection with the activity itself."

e. Achnowledgement: (Kingsbury, 1964) An acknowledgement is a nonjudgmental recognition of an act, communicated in some way to the student who has acted (Warren, 1969a, 1969b). An acknowledgement is a source of information and must not be confused with the reward or punishment related to goals. For instance, in a programmed text when the student compares his answer with the program's answer and finds it right, that is an acknowledgement, not a reward. Getting the right answer may have nothing to do with the student's goals.

f. Personal Perspectives: (Moore and Anderson, 1969, pp. 577 - 578) Personal perspective refers to the characteristic attitude or orientation a person has to his world in general and the educational setting in particular. This characteristic orientation changes from time to time for a given person depending both on his preferences and moods and on the situation in which he finds himself at the time.

(1) Agent Perspective. This perspective sees life as a puzzle and emphasizes a sense of active manipulation.

(2) Recipient Perspective. This perspective sees life as a game of chance and emphasizes a sense of receiverhood,

i.e., the person is the passive recipient of consequences over which he has virtually no control.

(3) Reciprocator Perspective. Life is viewed as a game of interactive strategy presupposing an agent-recipient perspective. "For example, in playing bridge there is room for meaningful acts of agency and we are sometimes [recipient of] all manner of outrageous happenings .... But the heart of the game .... lies in the possible interrelations between the two opposing teams, each of which must take the other into account. This means that a genuine game of strategy .... does not reduce ... into either the form of a puzzle or the form of a game of chance. This means, also, that a person who is looking at the world from the standpoint of the reciprocal perspective does not see another human being as merely puzzling or unpredictable, but rather he sees him as someone who is capable of looking at him as he looks at the other."

(4) Evaluator Perspective. Life is viewed as an evaluative entity and assessing, evaluating or judging are emphasized. "This perspective presupposes significant others in interaction, i.e., it presupposes entities that behave in terms

> of the other three perspectives ... The point of view of a judge in a bridge tournament is not that of any player qua player, nor is it some sort of average of consensus of the players' viewpoints. The referee's concern ranges over the whole game -- his viewpoint presupposes that there are players with their reciprocal perspectives."

g. Ability-Set: (Kingsbury, 1964) The ability-set is the set of all the abilities with which a student controls himself and his environment. This set includes non-teachable reflexes, motor skills, highly sophisticated mental processes, etc. The ability-set contains those abilities, and only those abilities, which are involved in controlling the self and world via the realization of planned goals. Obviously this ability-set varies with time. It collapses drastically with fatigue and expands with rest; maturation and learning also expand it. Electroshock, illness, the loss of an arm or an organ, and forgetting will shrink it. The location of the boundary line between the abilities a student does and does not command at a given time is of the utmost importance to the teacher.

h. Ability Periphery: (Kingsbury, 1964) The ability periphery is that set of abilities which a student does not, at the moment, command but which he could acquire immeidately in an appropriate environment. Here we don't have to be too careful about what we mean by "immediately" as long as we think of a reasonably short time. By appropriate environment we can mean a sleeping environment, a learning environment, a hypnotic environment, an environment in which maturation can take place, etc. Naturally, what is in the student's periphery depends upon what is in his ability-set. If typing accurately at a rate of 60 words per minute is in his ability-set, then typing accurately at 61 words per minute is probably in his periphery, but if 20 words per minute is his speed, then 61 words per minute is not in his periphery. And there is no guarantee that if 61 words per minute is in his periphery at 10 a.m. it will still be in his periphery at 11 a.m. -- he may have lost an arm or got tired, etc.

2. Some Characteristics of an Optimum Training Environment

The optimum training environment is a situation which contains a student with an ability-set, a goal-set, and a personal perspective. The interactional possibilities of the situation are characterized as follows:

a. Perspectives Flexibility (Moore and Anderson, 1969, pp. 585-586)

"One environment is more conducive to learning than another if it both permits and facilitates the taking of more perspectives toward whatever is to be learned .... Learning is more rapid and deeper if the learner can approach whatever is to be learned:

(i) from all four of the perspectives rather than from just three, from three rather than from just two, and from two rather than from only one; and

(ii) in all combinations of these perspectives -- hence, an environment that permits and facilitates fewer combinations is weaker from a learning standpoint than one that makes provision for more combinations.

".... the attitude the learner brings to the environment each time he enters it [is critical]. Imagine a learner who, one day, is filled with a sense of agency -- he is in no mood, for instance, to [receive from] anything or anybody. An environment will be more powerful from a learning standpoint if it lets him start off with whatever perspective he brings to it, and then allows him to shift at will ..."

"When experts in education maintain that formal schooling is unsuitable for [people], the use of the word 'formal' denotes the typical classroom situation in which most acts of agency are allocated to the teacher, the [evaluator's] role is also assigned primarily to the teacher, and the assumption of the reciprocal perspective in the form of interacting with peer-group members is forbidden through rules which are against note passing and which impose silence. About all that is left to the [students] is to be recipient to the acts of agency of the teacher. This undoubtedly is an unsuitable learning situation for most [people] .... Any environment which tends to confine people to one basic perspective is apt to become boring rather quickly."

b. Autotelic Flexibility (Moore and Anderson, 1969, pp. 585, 587-588) "One environment is more conducive to learning than another if the activities carried on within it are more autotelic."

For an environment to be autotelic it must frequently protect students against serious consequences so that the goings on within it can be enjoyed for their own sake. It is relatively easy to keep physical risks out of educational environments. It is more difficult to keep psychological and social risks out. If a student feels, while practicing a skill, that he may disgrace himself or look like a fool, or loose his position of respect in the group, or blight his future by failing to perform well, then the whole learning environment is shot through with high psychological and social risks. For a learning environment to be autotelic, it must be cut off from just such risks. "....the best way to learn really difficult things is to be placed in an environment in which you can try things out, make a fool of yourself, guess outrageously, or play it close to the vest -- all without serious consequences. The autotelic principle does not say that once the difficult task of acquiring a complex .... skill is well underway, it is then not appropriate to test yourself in a wide variety of serious [situations]. It is a common misunderstanding of the notion of an autotelic environment to assume that all activities should be made autotelic. Not so. The whole distinction requires a difference between a time for playfulness and a time for earnest efforts with real risks."

c. Productive Flexibility. (Moore and Anderson, 1969, pp. 585, 588-589) "One environment is more conducive to learning than another if what is to be learned within it is more productive .... one cultural object (i.e., something that is socially transmissible through learning) is more productive than another cultural object if it has properties which permit the learner either to deduce things about it, granted a partial presentation of it in the first instance, or make probable inferences about it, again assuming only a partial exposure to it .... Of two versions of something to be learned, we should choose the one which is more productive; this frees the learner to reason things out for himself and it also frees him from depending upon authority."

d. Personalization Potential (Moore and Anderson, 1969, pp. 585, 590-591) "One environment is more conducive to learning than another if it: (1) is more responsive to the learner's activities, and (2) permits and facilitates the learner's taking a more reflexive view of himself as a learner .... The environment must be both (1) responsive to the learner's activities, and (2) helpful in letting him learn to take a reflexive view of himself ...."

(1) Responsiveness: "The notion of a responsive environment is a complex one, but the intuitive idea is straightforward enough. It is the antithesis of an environment that answers a question that was never asked, or, positively stated, it is an environment that encourages the learner first to find a [problem], then find [a solution]. The requirements imposed upon an environment in order to qualify it as 'responsive' are:

(a) It permits the learner to explore freely, thus giving him a chance to discover a problem.

(b) It informs the learner immediately about the consequences of his actions ....

(c) It is self-pacing, i.e., events happen within the environment at a rate largely determined by the learner ....

(d) It permits the learner to make full use of his capacity for discovering relations of various kinds. (No one knows what anyone's full capacity for making discoveries is, but if we hand the learner a solution we certainly know we are not drawing upon his capacity.)

(e) It is so structured that the learner is likely to make a series of inter-connected discoveries about the physical, cultural, [personal], or social world. (What this amounts to depends, of course, upon what kinds of relations are being 'taught' within the environment.)

"The conditions for responsiveness taken together define a situation in which a premium is placed on the making of fresh deductions and inductions, as opposed to having things explained didactically. It encourages the learner to ask questions, and the environment will respond in relevant ways; but these ways may not always be simple or predictable. For a learner to make discoveries, there must be some gaps or discontinuities in his experience that he feels he must bridge. One way such discontinuities can be built into a responsive environment is to make provision for changing the 'rules of the game' without the learner knowing, at first, that they have been changed. However, it will not do to change the rules quixotically -- the new set of rules should build upon the old, displacing them only in part. Such changes allow the learner to discover that something has gone wrong -- old solutions will no longer do -- he must change in order to cope with change. In other words, if you want a learner to make a series of interconnected discoveries, you will have to see to it that he encounters difficulties that are problematic for him. When he reaches a solution, at least part of that solution should be transferable to the solution of the next perplexity .... Though a responsive environment does respond, its response has an integrity of its own. It is incorrect to think of a responsive environment as one which simply yields to whatever the learner wants to do -- there are constraints ...."

(2) Reflexiveness: "One environment is more reflexive than another if it makes it easier for the learner to see himself as a social object ... The acquisition of the social self is an achievement in learning. Unfortunately, some of us are underachievers. One reason .... for our ineptitude in fashioning ourselves is that it is hard to see what we are doing -- we lack an appropriate mirror. The reflexiveness which is characteristic of maturity is sometimes so late in coming that we are unable to make major alterations in ourselves .... If an environment is so structured that the learner not only can learn whatever is to be learned, but also can learn about himself qua learner, he will be in a better position to undertake whatever task comes next. It facilitates future learning to see our own learning career both retrospectively and prospectively."

e. Principles of a Skill/Ability Development Environment (Kingsbury, 1964)

(1) An ability is added to the student's ability-set only by providing him with something to do that requires the use of his related peripheral abilities. All time spent on related non-peripheral abilities is wasted time.

The student must not do things he already does well or try to do things he cannot do.

(2) The student should only be taught abilities and skills which are involved in the realization of an already possessed goal. The learning environment must clearly define how his actions are related to his particular goal-set.

(3) The only learnable goals are the sub-goals of an already possessed goal which is being inadequately realized. These sub-goals may themselves become main goals if they achieve independence of their original goal. As an example we could take the boy who desired to marry a girl but all the girls of the kind he had imagined as wives were marrying rich men. Being rich then becomes a sub-goal, but it may graduate to full goal status. For instance, he may become so involved in making money and enjoying the prestige that goes with it, and in buying things related to his other goals, that even marrying a girl who doesn't need money does not diminish his interest in creating wealth.

(4) The structure of the ability being taught must be well known to someone or something in the learning environment,

(e.g., Model, Teacher, Expert, Coach, Fellow Student, Teaching Machine).

(5) Every mistake the student makes must be acknowledged and every successful completion must be acknowledged.

(6) The learning environment must be designed so that a mistake has no permanent or long term harmful or negative consequences; e.g., clear up misunderstood terms and concepts, and correct misperformed roles/behaviors for successive progress in the ability domain (see also the conditions of an Autotelic environment).

(7) The learning environment must contain a monitor principle which is capable of deciding when a student is working in or out of his periphery and which decides on this basis what he is to do. Too much success indicates he is working within his ability-set and not learning; too much failure indicates he is working out of his ability periphery and not learning.

3. Conclusion

The specifications for this training environment indicate an optimum environment. Learning will of course occur under less auspicious circumstances. The reason for the specifications becomes evident when used to analyze the failures of any learning environment which needs improving. The basic trouble(s) can be spotted. Why did a psychotherapy session fail? -- the therapist was assuming the presence of goals which were not in fact there, and/or was working in an area which was not real to the patient, etc. Why did a class do so badly? -- the lesson was outside the ability peripheries of the majority of students and/or there was no motivational tie in, etc. An analysis of the training approach proposed in this paper will be done in terms of the principles set out in this section.

Operationalizing the Theory: Training Content and Method

1. Skill Training Methodology

a. Basic Sequence Of Training

The basic sequence of the method can be outlined as follows:

(1) The first step involves the presentation or identification of a behavioral skill/role which is described, demonstrated, discussed, analyzed, modeled, etc. in settings of the whole group and/or in groups of 2-3 people.

(2) The students practice the behavioral skill/role in two and three person groups.

(3) Each student, assisted by the coach and fellow students evaluates the level of performance and concentrates on aspects which need improvement.

(4) Then the behavioral skill/role is tried in a simulated life situation; usually a role play format but it could involve a game format.

(5) Again each student, with help, evaluates the level of performance in the simulated situation and recycles to

steps 1 or 2 if some aspects need improvement.

(6) Each student is required to use the behavioral skill/role in a real life situation outside of the training context. This is usually a "take home assignment".

(7) Each student then evaluates the level of performance in real life and describes the situation in which the behavioral skill/role was used. This is usually in the form of a report on the "assignment" presented to the whole group. The evaluation/discussion emphasizes the various settings in which the skill/role is useful and appropriate. Some students may decide to recycle to earlier steps in the sequence or to go on to other behavioral skills/roles and repeat the sequence.

(8) After the students have become familiar with the training sequence some of the discrete steps will be combined where applicable. This is especially true of the evaluate parts; the intent is to have students continually evaluate their performance and not rely on discrete periods of evaluation.

b. Description of the Skill Training Method: Instructions To Students

(1) The first step is to recognize and identify the skill or skills to be learned or improved. This can be done

in a number of ways, e.g. (a) by studying the group "here and now", watch how people act and behave, how people affect each other, what things help people understand each other better and so on; (b) by watching the TV playbacks (VTR) of yourself and others and noticing what people do and how they do it; does the behavior tell you what they think or feel or do you feel confused when you watch some people?; who has the most skill in communicating with others, and how does he do it? The VTR provides a good way of seeing yourself as others see you; you can stop the VTR and talk about any part.

(2) Once you have found skills that need improvement, you will probably find that they are too complicated to learn all at once and you have to work on parts of these skills. If you want to improve your skill of "communicating with other people" you will have to divide this very complex skill into smaller, simpler parts or sub-skills; some of these are relaxing, eye contact, following what others say verbally and non-verbally, being aware of feelings, expressing your feelings and so on (these sub-skills are described in the hand outs). To use an example from another part

of life we use the very complex skill of "deer hunting." In order to train someone to be a skillful hunter he has to learn about the country where he hunts, how to follow trails, how to survive off the land in case he gets lost; he has to learn about the life of deer and their behavior; he has to know about weapons and so on. These areas of knowledge are still very complex and each one needs to be broken into simpler skills For instance, the skill of shooting a rifle is still very complex and can be broken into the sub-skills of how to hold it steady, how to aim, how to pull the trigger without moving the rifle, how to keep your eyes open when you fire, how to steady your hands and relax, how to achieve good footing and good balance, how to know your target, how to judge distance and wind, how to know when to shoot and so on. And yet, you must know more; you must know where to find the game. No matter how good a shot you are you won't find anything to shoot unless you know how to stalk. Thus, the skills in stalking game need to be learned. One could go on and on with this example. The basic idea is that you must analyze the complex skills into simpler ones in order to improve your skill in general.

It is not possible, usually, to practice a complex skill without breaking it into simpler skills. You learn these simpler skills well and then combine them all again into the complex skill.

(3) In learning a skill it is useful to have some picture of the skill and behavior you want to learn. In the skills we are dealing with in the Life Skills Course, it is useful to have someone skilled in a particular behavior to model the behavior for everyone to copy. You can only get so far with describing the behavior in words; with a model to watch, the words have more meaning. In skill training we will try to follow this method: each person watches the model (for instance on the VTR) and then each student copies the model; if possible this will be VTRed for later viewing. Once you have practiced the behavior you watch your VTR (if it is available) and compare your performance with that of the model. This comparison will be hard to do if the two performances are not both recorded. If they are not, we must use the other group members' observations as a source of feedback on how successful you were in your performance compared to the model.

(4) The purpose of practicing and comparing is to decide what aspects of the skill need the most improvement and emphasis and what aspects of the skill need little work. By doing this analysis of your own performance you put your time only on those things which need improvement and do not waste time practicing things you already do well.

(5) When you practice a skill, you try to come closer to the goal of satisfactory performance of the skill It helps to have someone who can observe you and tell you when you are doing better and when you are doing worse. The observer is to tell you in effect "That's better, do more of that ...." or "That's not as good as last time; try to do more ...." This helps you move little by little to the final goal of performing at least as well as the model.

(6) One of the major ways in which we do this training is as follows:

    (a) A certain behavior is described in a handout or it comes up in a group discussion but you probably do not know exactly how you would do it.

To help you to define the behavior we divide the group into small groups of two or three people. In these small groups each one of you writes out the actions, words, expressions, gestures and so on that you could use to behave like the model. You can discuss this and exchange ideas about how to put the description into action.

(b) When you interact with people one of your goals is to communicate clearly to the other person what you think and feel. You do this by giving him cues about what you think and feel. These cues are both verbal (words) and non-verbal (e.g., gestures of your hands, expressions on your face, loudness, pitch, speed, inflection of your voice, your posture and the way you stand). In order to understand others and be understood by others we need to define, analyze and practice these verbal and non-verbal cues so that they feel right (natural) for us and also clearly communicate to the other person what we want to say and how we feel. We need to practice all methods of communicating that we can use and not depend only on words or gestures or facial expressions. We need to use all of these and any others available to communicate to others.

We also need to make sure all our cues (verbal and non-verbal) send the same message. For instance, when we say that we are not upset but act upset by frowning and wringing our hands then we just confuse people and they do not know how to "read" us. If we do this often, other people will not want to be around us; it's uncomfortable and others can't relax when they don't know how to take us - we say one thing and act another.

(c) Once you have a good idea of what to say, how to look and how to act to clearly communicate to another person, then IT IS NECESSARY TO DO IT. It is not enough to say that you will do this and that -- the coach will not believe it until he sees you do it. The real test of whether you know how to do something comes when you try it. Do you really communicate to the other person what you intend or does he get more than one message; is he confused as to what you are trying to tell him?

In order to find out how you come across to the other person you try out your behavior/skill/role in small groups of two or three people. Each person takes turns trying out the behavior while the other(s) judge his performance. These criteria can be used to judge:

- Does the person look and sound natural with the behavior or does he look and sound artificial, forced, tense, unnatural?
- Does the person communicate clearly, forcefully, or does he communicate in an unclear, weak and confused manner?
- Does the person use several ways of communicating (verbal and non-verbal) or does he only use one or very few ways?
- Does the person send the same message with his words and his actions or do they say different things; is he consistent or inconsistent in his verbal and non-verbal communication?

(7) Once you have learned the skill/behavior/role you try it in a life-like situation by role playing in the group. You try the skill in situations like real life but not for real in that

the mistakes you make will not hurt you and you can learn from your own and other's mistakes how to do better. Some examples of the situations which could be used for role playing are, job interviews, husband-wife discussions or arguments, parent-child problems, applying for a loan, handling a difficult sales clerk, handling a policeman, handling a drunken friend, talking to the boss, interviewing an official (e.g., in welfare, C.M.C., Indian Affairs, schools, etc.). Any type of situation can be used for practice before you use the skill in a life situation outside of the group. These trials ("dry runs") will be VTRed and we will watch them to find out how well we did, what went well and what needs more work.

(8) Since the whole purpose of the Life Skills Course is to learn how to handle your problems more skillfully, it is important to try these skills in real life. If you cannot use them in life or if they don't work for you then they are not worth learning. You are just wasting time in the

course. Thus, after each skill session is done you try the new skills in your life outside of the course and then, in the next session report to the group what happened: tell about the situation, what you did, what the result was, how you could improve your skill, what other situations it would be useful to try it in and so on.

2. Sequencing the Activities in the Program

The sequence of "presentation, analysis, trial, evaluation, reanalysis, retrial, reevaluation, etc." used in the skill training method just described serves as a basic organizing pattern throughout the course. The task of sequencing lessons and activities involves presenting material to the students at a rate which they can handle and which follows naturally from their developing interest and awareness. Thus, there can be no rigid detailed preplanned sequencing of given course components. Rather, the available components must be sequenced according to the skills and needs of the students. This requires the coaches to continually diagnose and prescribe in a process similar to Individualized Prescribed Instruction. It is more complex however since the Life Skills Course relies on group process and thus the activities prescribed must result from some diagnosis of development of the group and from diagnosis of individual needs. This creates problems but we offer this course sequence pattern as a starting point.

a. The initial lessons are fairly light so that the group can come to know each other better and relax with each other e.g., using an introductions game and group relaxation exercises (Gunther, 1967). During this time, as an introduction to the use of the VTR, the students play with the equipment to become familiar with it; this takes from three to five sessions.

b. After this, the group concentrates on more serious skill oriented activities. One way of doing this is to use a series of case studies combined with role-plays involving the most common problems exhibited by the students in the Life Skills Course. The sequence would be one such as follows:

    (1) Present the first case study/role play with no demands on the student except to discuss it and try to develop a plan of action. This process would be VTRed.

    (2) In the next session the VTR is played back and the students assess their problem solving abilities. If the group is typical, the level of skill will be very

low and the coach persists in requiring skill practice as required. The point is to develop a need in the students for the skills of problem solving. At this time, the instruction for the problem solving process is introduced.

(3) Then the second case study/role play is introduced and the process VTRed.

(4) This VTR is played while the coach focuses on the problem solving process and the helpful behaviors needed to implement the process. Then a handout is given which describes some of the most helpful behaviors e.g., contributing, summarizing, clarifying, seeking contributions. The skill training sequence is used (up through step 7, i.e., the use of the skill in a simulated life situation).

(5) Present the third case study/role play and VTR the process. The students are to keep in mind the problem solving process and the helpful behavior while handling the problem.

(6) This VTR is played and evaluated in terms of both the problem solving process and the helpful behaviors. At

this point the coach has each student promise (make a committment) to try the behaviors outside of class and report back the next session.

(7) Each student reports on how he used the behaviors in his life. Those who have nothing to report are re-assigned the same thing. Those who feel some success are assigned a task with a little more difficulty, e.g., to do the behavior with more skill or to try it in another situation or with different people or to try different behavioral skills.

(8) The student continue to use case studies/role plays to test and use their skills and use the VTR of the process to evaluate and determine their needs for practice. Each student identifies the harmful behavior(s) he is most likely to perform or the helpful behavior(s) he is most likely to omit and promises the group to work on them. He keeps a record of his progress and reports to the group. As each behavior is brought under his control he promises to work on the next behavior until he performs at a satisfactory level.

c. Once the skill training part of the course, described above, is reasonably complete it is time for the more serious applications of skills to life problems. In this phase of the course there will be a variety of group settings used, from the whole group working on a common problem to each individual working alone and all possible combinations of these (e.g., out of a group of 12, five may work on a problem in common, three may work on another problem in common, and the other four work on their own). There will most likely be a core of lessons common to all students. What this core involves, of course, depends on the common needs and problems of the group and their purpose for taking training. For instance, if the students are in a job training program then the likely common core lessons will revolve around the lessons in the job area of the Life Skills curriculum. The suggested procedure is given here in terms of the instructions to the students.

This is a suggestion as to how you could best use the time remaining on the course to your advantage. Whether or not you get anything out of the Life Skills Course depends on how serious you are in using the help available to get solutions to some of your own problems in life.

(1) Go over in your mind some of the things in your life which bother you, things that you would like to see an improvement in, the things that could be better. It might help you to list these things for yourself. It is very important that you be honest with yourself here. Some problems were listed at the beginning of the course in the "Life Skills Check List" and you may want to use that as a start.

(2) From this list pick the problems that you can do something about; things that you can change.

(3) From the ones that you can do something about pick out a few problems or problem areas that you want to work on the rest of the course time. Don't pick too many, maybe just one or two big problems you want to work on.

(4) The job for you, the group and the coach is to use the rest of the time in the course to make a program which will help you with these problems that you select. We want to concentrate on the problems that each one of you are interested in.

Some of you may pick the same general problems and this means that you can work together. Some of you may pick a problem area that no one else has picked and so you will mostly work alone but using the other group members, including the coach, whenever desirable. At times the whole group will be involved in helping each other sort out some problems using the helpful behaviors and the group problem solving method; at other times everyone may be working on their own.

The group problem solving process which was presented to you should be used whenever you feel it is useful. It will be most useful when you are trying to solve a very complex problem. This is true because part of the problem is that you don't know what the problem is, you're confused and unclear about it all. So you need a method to handle this mess. The problem solving process is a systematic method for sorting out a problem and finding out what is involved.

The Life Skills Course has lessons which deal with various problems in family, children, grooming, alcohol and drugs, sex, prejudice, babysitting, single parent families, wills, money problems, landlords, nutrition, family strengths, police, legal aid, community meetings, agencies, job possibilities, employer expectations, application forms and letters of application, resumes, job interviews, quitting a job. More are available and can be made up if there is need.

(5) It is up to you to use the help available to learn skills, facts, and methods to help you to better solve your problems in life.

3. Some general Characteristics of This Approach

a. Flexibility of Instructional Methods and Settings:

The Life Skills Course uses flexible student groupings: some activities require the whole group of 10 to 12 people, some use groups of two or three and some are done individually. In order to develop the skill of contributing in a group of 10 to 12 people, for instance, some students may need to gradually approximate this goal since the task overwhelms them. Contributing in a larger group is not in their "ability periphery" but contributing in a three person group is. Once the skills are developed in the small group they must be transferred to the larger group setting.

In addition, the methods and materials used to teach are varied: some involve the students actively and some passively; they use various sensory modalities ("multi-media");

they emphasize the various instructional domains of cognition, affect and action ("psychomotor"); they utilize a variety of feedback methods (Watson, 1969) such as VTR (Bailey and Sowder, 1970; Nielsen, 1964; Salomon and McDonald, 1970) fellow students and coach; "experts" and "authorities" in both "live" and "prerecorded" form such as books, films, tapes and records; tests and other methods of objective evaluation; check lists and rating forms for self evaluation filled out by the person and group members e.g., "instrumented groups" (Blake and Mouton; Hall, 1970).

We attempt to approach the ideal of using the total community as a learning environment, emphasizing learning which occurs in and out of the training setting; ideally students should use life as a source of learning. This idea, while rather difficult to implement, seems essential before significant change can occur.

In sum, anything and everything is viewed in terms of its learning potential. If something can be used as an information source and learning opportunity then there is an explicite attempt to use it in the course.

b. Emphasis or Clarity, Structure, Skill Development and Behavior Change:

The emphasis on clarity and structure throughout the program lets everyone know the expected and desired outcomes, the restrictions and the freedoms. To assist in this goal the intentions and procedures of the course are written out as much as possible for the students to read and study. They can see there are no tricks, things are not made up as we go along. For example, in training a behavioral skill, students receive a handout which describes the behavior with examples and explanations of the usefulness of the behavior. This material, when read to the group with further explanations and elaborations, helps clear up misunderstandings and address problems which may arise. We wish to make sure that all students are as clear as possible about what will take place. Since the course emphasizes group process and since the students typically are unfamiliar with the use of groups for learning and behavior change there is a detailed statement of the purpose of "Learning/Helping group," group process, helpful behaviors of group members, etc. (e.g., a "contract" for group process such as Egan, 1970, describes). This document is available to all group members. When a problem arises about where a particular technique fits into the scheme of things or about the purpose of an exercise the coach can refer to various sections of the document and show students that it was a planned activity with a definite purpose. The students will probably not fully understand the document since no one can really know it until they have experienced it in action. Nevertheless, it exists, specified in considerable detail and referred to throughout the course. The presence of this document provides the students with a sense of continuity and safety, a source of independent authority, so that the authority of the coach is not constantly brought into question.

The method of training stresses behavior and skill, not problems or motives. This may sound contradictory since the Life Skills Course is a program in applied problem solving. We believe however, that a frontal attack on problems tends to fix them more solidly since they are aspects of life which people can not confront. Dealing with problems directly reactivates mechanisms of denial and distortion. Thus problems are approached indirectly as situations for behavioral skill development. We do not dig for problems since the program is not group therapy or confession (Mowrer, 1964; Mainard, 1968). Instead emphasis is on how the person can behave differently provide him with a wider array of behaviors for a given type of situation or problem. The theme of training is "What did you do?" (Not "Why did you do it?"); "What else can you do which will be better?" "How can you do things differently?"

While in the training group the focus is reflected in the question "Is what you are doing here and now helping you to become more skilled in solving life's problems? How?" The emphasis on the here and now makes explicit and objective the complex events in group process, increasing students awareness of interpersonal influence. This helps students learn faster and more effectively from each other. The here and now is all that is common to the whole group. The here and now focus helps people learn to identify cues present in the group and what they mean (the meanings of behavior), learn when the cues from different communication modes are congruent or incongruent, learn what cues should be used to guide more skillful interpersonal relations, learn what different behaviors mean to different people, learn what impeds or facilitates skill development and clarity in the group and how it is doing this. Also, by focusing on the here and now we avoid bogging down in regrets over the past and worrying about things we cannot change, assigning blame to ourselves or others and other such non-productive actions.

The focus of the helping process can be expressed in these rules for behavioral skill oriented group help (see Glasser, 1965; Job Corps Counseling Notes, 1968; Walker):

(1) Work in the present: The past, especially past failures is deemphasized. The past is useful when it provides information, methods, options, and ideas to work on for the present. Concentrating on past inabilities or searching for past causes for present problems usually only provides people with excuses and justifications for current poor behavior.

(2) Deal with behavior: We avoid "reasons" or "justifications", even if they are true. We also avoid "motives" and "intentions", except when they relate directly to behavior; i.e., a person may intend one outcome and act in a way which produces an outcome different from or opposite to his intention. This incongruence should be worked on. Behavior can be worked on directly with little or no guessing needed. The issue is what does your behavior tell people about yourself and your "intentions".

(3) Get a commitment for change from the person: The person should decide whether his present behavior has the desired

result. He should ask, "Is this helping me?", "What *can* I do about it?", "What *will* I agree to do about it?". This constitutes an important part of the problem solving process. The person must make a commitment and he must understand that meeting it is *his* responsibility. Great care must be made to see that the person makes a realistic plan to meet his commitment.

(4) *Take no excuses*: Usually people test others and the group to see if they will take excuses for not fulfilling their commitments. If the group accepts excuses they are in effect telling the person, "You are worthless, ineffective, you really can't do it." If they ask the person, "Why didn't you do it?" they are looking for excuses. Instead, when following up on a commitment, the group asks, "When can you do it?". If the group accepts no excuses they let the person know they think he is worthwhile and they are willing to wait for him to fulfill his commitment. If the person continues to have trouble changing his behavior, the group should examine the plan that they made with him. Change it if necessary, but do not give up.

c. Successive Approximation, Simulation, and Skill Transfer.

The skill training sequence (pp. 162-172) and the course sequence (pp. 172-179) specify how the program incorporates successive approximation, simulation and transfer. One thing should be made more explicit. The focus on behavior change and skill development requires students to constantly recycle back to the same problem areas using, increased skill and sophistication. This recycling provides one of the more meaningful evaluations of progress since students constantly compare their present to their prior skill levels. It is not assumed that because students have done a lesson or gone through an exercise that they know or understand it. They must show that they can use and apply their learnings consistently in a variety of settings. Having a student read a text does not insure that he has learned or understood the content. Using the knowledge in practice or discussion constitutes both a test and a reinforcement of one level of learning. A student who has a good intellectual understanding of a process (i.e., can explain it to someone else) may not be able to apply it effectively without being guided through it a few times. A student able to carry through a process when required to do so with supervision may fail to make use of it when not supervised. The requirement to use a skill in an unsupervised situation and report on his experience may influence him to really learn the skill. A student who has all the facts needed to prove that an attitude or belief is false and undesirable may continue to hold that attitude or belief because these states of mind are more emotional than intellectual. In sum, the learning environment stresses the additive aspects of learning where students are required to appropriately use all previous knowledge and skills in the present situations. These situations can occur any time or place and are not restricted to the training setting. Thus students must report on how they use their learnings in other settings.

To assist in maximum transfer to life extensive use is made of various simulations of life. Role playing constitutes one of the major methods (Allen, 1967; Back and Wyden, 1968; Bertcher, Gordon, Hages and Mialy, 1970; Bourdon, 1970; Gulbertson, 1957; Klein, 1956, 1959). The role play methodology is very flexible and has the added advantage of requiring initiative on the part of students. Game methodology (Abt; Boocock and Coleman, 1966; The Head Box) can be used to assist learning of some skills. For instance it is necessary to insure that interpersonal skills learned in the micro-training setting (2 and 3 person groups) transfer to the total group. Also, students must learn additional skills in larger groups since some skills, such as observing the group process and commenting on it, getting a consensus from the group, and gatekeeping to see that all who wish to contribute are allowed to do so, can only be learned in larger groups although some aspects of the behaviors may be learned in the micro-setting. In larger groups there exist more complexities of possible interaction styles, relations and sequences. Since time does not stretch, the number of interactions for each person must decrease as the group size increases or else either everyone is talking at once or a few people are dominating the group. The number of possible relationships increases factorially with the group size. In order to learn these group skills, however the group should not be too serious, attempting to deal with threatening or embarrassing material. To reduce the social and psychological risks of learning, group games can be introduced so that these complex skills can be learned. When things are too serious learning efficiency is reduced (p. 153). The focus needs to be on the skills and not on the problem; attempting to deal with problems that are too important may in fact impede the learning of the skills.

Analysis of the Methodology in Terms of the Optimum Training Environment

The time has come to analyze the approach described here to see how close it comes to the theoretical optimum. Of course, there is many a slip between the description and the implementation of a method and we again emphasize that we are in practice quite far from the optimum. However, it will be useful to at least assess the statement of the method in terms of the ideal.

Table 1 presents my judgments of the way the training methodology operationalizes the theory. The "x's" indicate the areas of match between theory and method. The letter-number symbols on the left hand side refer to the steps of the methods as outlined in the paper. The page numbers indicate where the theoretical principles and training methods are discussed in the paper.

The theoretical principles most adequately operationalized are those of "Perspective Flexibility", "Productive Flexibility" and "Reflexiveness" since the whole Life Skills Course seeks to maxamize these aspects of the students. Those principles least adequately operationalized deal with "Responsiveness". There is more direction in the training method than specified in the theory although the direction seeks to "goad" students to explore at their own pace to discover interconnected relationships. They are not allowed to not explore and

TABLE I MATCH BETWEEN TRAINING METHOD AND THEORY

TRAINING METHOD:	THEORY OF OPTIMUM TRAINING ENVIRONMENT:	Perspectives (pp.151-3)	Autotelic (pp.153-4)	Productive (pp. 154-5)	Responsiveness (155-7) 1. Free exploring	2. Immed. Feedback	3. Self pacing	4. Discover	5. Inter-connections	Reflexiveness (p. 158)	Skill Development (pp. 158-60) 1. Use periphery	2. Ability Goal Related	3. New Goals are Sub-goals	4. Skill model	5. Feedback	6. Mistakes not harmful	7. Monitor
SKILL TRAINING METHOD DESCRIPTION pp. 163-172	b.(1) p. 163	STUDENTS REQUIRED TO TAKE ALL PERSPECTIVES →		GREAT DEAL OF PRODUCTIVITY REQUIRED: ROLE PLAY, PROBLEM SOLVING →				x	x	x		x					
	b.(2) P. 164							x	x		x	x					
	b.(3) p. 166					x		x	x					x	x		x
	b.(4) p. 167									x	x						
	b.(5) p. 167					x									x		x
	b.(6)(a) p. 167-8										x			x			
	b.(6)(b) p. 168-9									x		x					
	b.(6)(c) p. 169-70				x					x	x	x					x
	b.(7) p. 170-17		x									x	x			x	
	b.(8) p. 171-2		x							x			x				
SEQUENCING PROGRAM pp. 172-179	a. p. 172-3		x				x				x	x				x	
	b.(1) p. 173		x			x					x						
	b.(2) p. 173-4		x									x		x	x		x
	b.(4) p. 174		x			x					x				x		x
	b.(5) p. 174		x						x								
	b.(6) p. 174-5		x			x							x		x		
	b.(7) p. 175		x							x	x						
	b.(8) p. 175		x							x		x	x		x		
	c.(1) p. 176-7		x		x					x			x				
	c.(2) p. 177		x		x						x						
	c.(3) p. 177		x		x						x						
	c.(4) p. 177-9		x		x		x	x					x				
	c.(5) p. 179		x		x												
GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS pp. 179-188	Groupings p. 179	x	x		x		x				x					x	
	Materials p. 179-80	x		x		x				x				x	x		x
	Use Community p. 180	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x				
	Clarity/Structure p. 181-2		x	x						x	x	x		x			
	Skill Emphasis p. 182-3	x	x	x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x			x	
	Behav. Change p. 184-5 1. Present		x					x	x								
	2. Behavior									x	x						
	3. Commitment	x		x						x	x	x	x				
	4. Excuses									x	x	x	x		x		
	Recycle to Problems p. 186	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
	Cumulative Learning p. 186-7	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x
	Role Play p. 187	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
	Games p. 187-8	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

this can produce a contradiction between the theoretical ideal of "Autotelic and Perspectives Flexibility" and the training method. That is, students are not in training to enjoy themselves but to become more skillful. The problems involved in implimenting "Responsiveness derive most from the use of the "Learning/Helping Group". The theory/ methodology coordinating group process and individual development is weak and unclear and needs work.

The methodology is also weak in the area of diagnosis of needs and goals. This process requires considerable sensitivity from the coach in addition to the constant "goad" on the students to assess their needs and goals and evaluate how the training is meeting them.

Another weak area is the role of the coach. The methodology should specify more explicitly how the coach behaves, when to intervene and when to leave students on their own. In terms of training emphasis the most adequate methods are those discussed under the heading "Successive Approximation, Simulation and Skill Transfer" (pp. 186-8) i.e., the constant recycling to the same problem areas at a more skillful level, the emphasis on cumulative learning, and the use of case study/role play and games.

This brief analysis serves as a beginning for the redevelopment of the theory and method. Implementing the method helps in this process since as usual, things are easier said than done. Inadequacies are nowhere more exposed than when the method is implemented.

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ESTIMATED DIRECT OPERATING COSTS

- J. R. Fafard

General

1. Cost estimates have been prepared for operating:

   a. the Life Skills component;

   b. a combined Life Skills and Basic Education program.

2. The cost estimates are based on assumptions listed in paragraphs 3 to 9. These estimates show that the direct operating costs of conducting the Life Skills component would be $3.13 per student day as compared to $5.99 per student day to conduct the combined Life Skills and Basic Education program. These rates include the amortization of the initial capital outlay over 10 courses.

Assumptions

3. That basic facilities (rent, heat, power, janitorial services, etc.); standard furniture and equipment (desks, tables, typewriters, etc.); and general supplies (pencils, paper, binders, rulers, etc.) costs are not included in the estimate.

4. That there will be an enrollment of 48 students, subdivided into 4 groups of 12 each, two groups taking Life Skills in the morning and Basic Education in the afternoon and two groups taking Basic Education in the morning and Life Skills in the afternoon.

5. That the course length would be approximately 5 months.

6. That the following staff would be required:

   a. Life Skills Component - a supervisor and 2 coaches

   b. Combined Program - a supervisor, a senior coach, 4 coaches and one clerk-steno.

7. That students allowances are paid by Manpower and Immigration. These costs are not included in the estimate.

8. That the salary of project staff would be as follows:

Supervisor	$12,000.00 per annum
Senior Coach	7,000.00 per annum
Coaches	6,000.00 per annum
Clerk-Steno	4,000.00 per annum

9. In arriving at the direct operating cost estimate salaries for 6 months have been charged against the operation of one course, even though the course length is approximately 5 months. This seems realistic in that only two courses could be conducted in one year allowing time for staff holidays and preparation for subsequent courses.

ESTIMATED CAPITAL (Initial) OUTLAY REQUIRED

	Life Skills Component	Combined Program
Special Training Equipment		
Closed circuit television units	$ 5,000.00	$ 5,000.00
Other audio-visual equipment such as projectors, recorders and supplies	1,700.00	1,800.00
	$ 6,700.00	$ 6,800.00
Non-Expendable Course Materials	2,500.00	3,800.00
	$ 9,200.00	$ 10,600.00

ESTIMATED DIRECT OPERATING COSTS

	Life Skills Component	Combined Program
Staff - salaries and benefits	$ 13,000.00	$ 25,500.00
Special materials and training equipment repair and maintenance	600.00	700.00
Expendable course materials	200.00	1,200.00
Student expenses for recreation, tours and other support activities	300.00	300.00
	$ 14,100.00	$ 27,700.00